

Gamsakhurdia forces hold out

POTI, Georgia (R) — Forces loyal to Georgia's ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia mustered in driving snow on Sunday to defend the western city of Poti, one of their last strongholds, against government troops camped across a river. "Don't worry. Poti is in our hands," said one gunman perched atop an armoured vehicle at the main bridge crossing the Rioni river into the town of 20,000. The troops said they were ready to blow up the crossing point to stop any attack. "Viva our president," he shouted, pointing his rifle towards forces of the ruling Military Council under cover in a dense pine forest. But there was no answer from the opponents who drove Mr. Gamsakhurdia from his parliament 20 days ago. Dozens of snipers huddled behind sandbags on the Poti side of the bridge, its stonework partially smashed away by a week of gunbattles. Others waited inside a candlelit bunker by the road, armed with hand grenades, rifles or shotguns. In the picturesque Black Sea town of two-storey houses and tree-lined boulevards rumours abounded that the council troops were about to strike.



Libya responds to U.N. secretary-general

ROME (AP) — Libya said Sunday it had responded to the U.N. secretary-general on a U.N. Security Council demand that it surrender Libyans accused of bombing Pan Am flight 103 and a French airliner. The official Libyan news agency JANA, citing an unidentified foreign ministry source, said Libya had given a "total, effective and prompt response" to a letter from the secretary-general. The JANA dispatch gave no details about the response and did not say if it meant Libya would continue to refuse to surrender the Libyans facing charges in the United States, Britain and France. A Security Council resolution passed unanimously last Tuesday condemned the bombings, cited the demands for the surrender of the suspects and urged "the Libyan government immediately to provide a full and effective response to those requests so as to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism." JANA said the Libyan response reaffirmed Libya's determination to combat international terrorism.

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Jordan's delegation leaves for Moscow

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber Sunday left for Moscow at the head of a seven-member Jordanian delegation to the Middle East multilateral peace talks due to start in the Russian capital Tuesday. Taking part in the talks will be foreign ministers of 40 countries, who will be tackling regional issues, including arms control, water, economic cooperation and other humanitarian issues such as refugees.

In a departure statement, Dr. Abu Jaber told Jordan Television said the Moscow meeting would provide an opportunity to meet with a large number of foreign ministers from the Arab countries of the Gulf, Union of Maghreb States, the European Community, Japan, Canada and the two sponsors, the U.S. and Russia.

Dr. Abu Jaber also said that the Moscow meetings would provide

a good opportunity to present the Palestine question to the whole world. He said the Moscow meetings are paramount to an international conference, because they will come up with ideas on how to organise negotiations in the future.

He said the Jordanian delegation had preliminary ideas on subjects of discussion at the meetings noting that Jordan had also specific ideas about the peace process.

Dr. Abu Jaber said Jordan would take this opportunity to explain Arab causes, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict. In an answer to a question, Dr. Abu Jaber said Jordan did not need any authorisation from any Arab country to take part in the meetings and that Jordan had its own independent opinion.

Asked about prior Arab coordination, Dr. Abu Jaber said

there was an exchange of ideas and "earlier talks were held between the Arab parties concerned. We respect the opinions of these Arab parties and appreciate them. However, Dr. Abu Jaber said, "there are priorities for each Arab party, which had decided either to attend or not to attend these meetings."

He pointed out that the Moscow meetings were aimed at organising talks, meaning that "they are talks about the talks, but there will be no negotiations nor there will be any solutions."

Asked if there was any relation between the Moscow meetings and the bilateral talks, Dr. Abu Jaber said there was no relation, "because every meeting has its own track." He noted that bilateral talks are aimed at solving the major issues, while the multilaterals are for resolving secondary issues, resulting from the

major issues.

The Russian ambassador to Jordan, who was at the airport to see the delegation off, said his country's acceptance to host this conference stems from its genuine desire to achieve peace.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Ambassador Yuri Gradonov said his country was concerned about resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with international legitimacy. He welcomed the visit to his country by the Jordanian delegation to exchange ideas and strengthen political and economic cooperation with his country. The Jordanian delegation is accompanied by a five-member expert delegation, comprising planning ministry secretary general Safwan Touqan, Dr. Ahmad Qatanani, Mr. Mazen Jumaa, Mr. Abdullah Al Khatib and Dr. Murad Bino.

Israelis optimistic on reaching accord with U.S. on guarantees

Shamir confidant says Israel can live with American 'constraints'

BEIJING (R) — The United States and Israel will reach agreement on an Israeli request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees only after Middle East peace talks in Moscow next week, Foreign Minister David Levy said on Saturday.

Mr. Levy, briefing reporters on Friday's meeting in Washington between Israeli Ambassador Zelman Shoval and Secretary of State James Baker, said: "The arrangements and the understandings will be finalised with Baker's return from Moscow."

He voiced optimism over an issue that has gone unresolved for months while Israel and its U.S. ally argued over terms for peace talks and a boom in Jewish settlement of the occupied territories, home to 1.75 million Palestinians.

Palestinians view the 100,000 settlers as a provocation.

Mr. Levy, who flew to Russia on Sunday having opened diplomatic ties with China in Beijing, declined comment when asked whether the United States would link the assistance to an Israeli promise to curb the settlements.

"I am not ready to go into it," Mr. Levy said.

Washington views settlements as an obstacle to peace. Israel's hardline government has refused to halt settlement but needs the guarantees to help absorb an influx of hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

Jewish sources briefed on Mr. Baker's meetings with two congressional leaders on Friday said he hinted Washington might demand a halt to new housing construction in the territories occupied since the 1967 Middle East war.

They said Mr. Baker proposed Israel agree not to put up any new houses in the territories although it could complete thousands already under construction.

Such a formula would enable Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to deny to hardline political constituents that he had bowed to American pressure to freeze settlements.

Mr. Levy said he hoped to meet Mr. Baker in Moscow where both are due to make speeches at the two-day conference starting on Tuesday.

He said Mr. Baker told Mr. Shoval of America's commitment to helping Israel integrate the hundreds of thousands of newcomers arriving under Soviet emigration reforms that began in

late 1989.

Israel has feared conditions would be attached to the much-needed loan guarantees since last September when President George Bush, in a bid to coax Arabs and Israelis to the peace table, persuaded Congress to delay considering the request until now.

Israel already receives more than \$3 billion a year in U.S. aid, more than any other country. The five years of guarantees, likely to be considered on a year-by-year basis, would permit it to raise commercial loans on more favourable terms.

On Sunday, Health Minister Ehud Olmert told army radio the U.S. proposal did not go far enough but showed there was a basis for negotiation.

Mr. Olmert, who is close to Mr. Shamir, said Washington had changed its tune on loan guarantees. "That is significant. Not enough as far as we are concerned, but it shows there is a basis for negotiating."

Opposition Labour leader Shimon Peres said he favoured the freeze but added: "I think the settlements should be frozen anyway but not as a condition."

The American proposition ... actually allows Israel to continue building new houses within the programme that has been approved, which is quite a number of houses in the first place," Mr. Olmert told reporters.

"We are talking about a multi-year programme," Mr. Olmert said after a weekly cabinet meeting.

"They agreed in the coming three years Israel will continue to build massively in the territories," Mr. Olmert said.

"I don't think presently the issue is whether we can build new houses because I think this has been settled," he said.

Meanwhile members of an American Jewish delegation that visited Saudi Arabia and Jordan warned Sunday that Israeli settlements could interfere with Middle East peace talks and U.S. loan guarantees.

A news conference by the American Jewish congress was disrupted by four Jewish settlers, who pushed their way into the room shouting "the settlements will continue" and "go home Americans."

Hotel security men intervened and the demonstrators left. Robert Lifton, president of the congress, described as "historic"

the group's four-day trip to Saudi Arabia. It was the first official visit by a Jewish group to the kingdom.

Talks with Prince Saud Al Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, and Prince Salman, the governor of Riyadh, were followed by visits with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordanian leaders.

Mr. Lifton said all the Arab leaders expressed "grave concerns that a continuation of extensive expansion of the settlements ... could make it difficult, if not impossible, to move the peace process forward."

He also said that "each of the leaders said that the Arab World wants peace with Israel."

Asked about the guarantees, the delegation warned that President Bush and Secretary Baker were adamant that Israel must make concessions on settlements if it wanted U.S. backing for lower interest loans.

"The Bush-Baker administration has made it clear they are going to have their way on this subject," said Howard Squadron, a past president of the congress.

Settlers evicted from Jordan

Also Sunday, Israeli soldiers and police evicted a group of farmers who erected a tent settlement across the Jordanian border to dramatise demands for more government aid, media reports said.

Troops removed the squatters and their tents from inside Jordan in seven minutes at about 4 p.m. (1400 GMT), the Israeli news agency Itim reported.

Although Israeli extremists consider Jordan a part of biblical Israel, farmers from Ein Tamar, just south of the Dead Sea, were only trying to publicise demands for more government housing assistance, Itim said.

It said the 22 families in Ein Tamar, about six kilometres west of the border, decided on the unusual move because "in Israel, the government only pays attention to settlements across the green line."

The farmers agreed to leave after Housing Minister Ariel Sharon promised to meet and discuss their demands, Itim added.

Officials in Mr. Sharon's office declined immediate comment, saying they were still checking the incident. The army also had no immediate comment.

Shamir vows no halt to settlement

TEL AVIV (R) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, setting the stage for a confrontation with Washington, said on Sunday that Israel would not halt Jewish settlement in the occupied Arab territories.

"Israel and all those people who represent Israel are not talking and not speaking about any freeze of settlements," Mr. Shamir told a conference of Jewish journalists. "Please forget about it."

Shamir's uncompromising statements followed a U.S.-Israeli meeting in Washington on Friday in which U.S. Secretary of State James Baker tied U.S. approval for \$10 billion in loan guarantees to a halt in Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"It is our position that we have to develop all the parts of our country without exceptions... This is our policy and we will follow this policy," Mr. Shamir said.

The headline leader said Israel included the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. All were occupied in the 1967 Middle East war.

"We hope all these parts of our country will be settled in the not faraway future by many, many Jewish people," Mr. Shamir said.

The future of the occupied areas is at the heart of the U.S.-brokered Middle East peace talks. Washington wants Israel to trade land for peace guarantees with its neighbours.

Despite Mr. Shamir's position, he said Israel "urgently needed" U.S. loan guarantees to finance immigration. Some 400,000 people have arrived, most from the former Soviet Union, and hundreds of thousands more are expected.

"The United States understands that for us the building and development of all parts of Eretz Israel (the land of Israel) is a matter of principle," Mr. Shamir said.

"We will now engage in a common effort to find a formula that will not contradict U.S. policy or this principle of ours," Mr. Shamir said.

According to a detailed survey by Peace Now, Israel started at least 13,000 housing units in the West Bank and Gaza Strip last year — a 60 per cent increase over all Jewish housing built there in the previous years of occupation.

A further 5,000 units — two-thirds of all those approved — were included in the 1992 budget.

Shafi returns from U.S.

AMMAN (Petra) — Head of the Palestine delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks Haider Abdul Shafi Sunday arrived here from Washington, after heading the Palestinian side to the third round of bilateral talks held in the U.S. capital. In an arrival statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Abdul Shafi said the Palestinian participation in the Moscow multilateral talks is left to the Palestinian leadership to decide on. However, he noted, Palestinians felt that if there were no progress in the bilateral talks, there was no justification for taking part in the multilateral talks. Dr. Abdul Shafi, however, did not rule out the Palestinian participation in the Moscow talks at a later stage.

Islamic finance ministers to meet in Libya

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — The council of governors of the Jeddah-based Development Bank (IDB) will meet in the Libyan capital Tripoli on February 18, the Saudi press agency SPA reported on Sunday. The Libyan government had invited finance ministers from the 46 IDB member states to attend the two-day meeting, SPA said.

Iran releases Sudanese POW

NICOSIA (R) — Iran on Sunday released a Sudanese national who was taken prisoner while fighting for Iraq during the 1980-1988 Gulf war, IRNA news agency reported. The release, to the custody of Sudan's ambassador in Tehran, was a goodwill gesture following a request from the government in Khartoum. IRNA said in a report received in Cyprus.

Kurdish group claims Istanbul blasts

ISTANBUL (R) — The outlawed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) said on Sunday it was behind bomb blasts which killed one person and injured six at Istanbul's Kapalicarsi covered bazaar and in a shopping mall. An unidentified caller to newspapers claimed responsibility on behalf of the PKK. Earlier, the Anatolian news agency said two people were killed in the Saturday blasts.

3 killed by falling wall in Algiers

ALGIERS (R) — A woman, her child and a young man were killed on Sunday when an old Algiers wall, undermined by two days of torrential rain, collapsed on top of them, state television said.

Iraq releases 2 Kuwaiti policemen

KUWAIT (R) — Iraq has released two Kuwaiti policemen seized in the demilitarised zone between the two countries this month, the interior ministry said on Sunday. The release on Saturday followed intensive contacts between Kuwait and the International Committee of the Red Cross, a ministry spokesman said in a statement.

Palestinians undecided on participation in multilaterals

By Lami K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was last night considering sending a Palestinian negotiating delegation, comprising Palestinians from inside and outside the Israeli occupied territories, to Middle East peace talks that will start in Moscow Tuesday and leave it to the co-sponsors to accept or reject Palestinian participation, according to Palestinian officials in Amman and Tunis.

The officials said that in order to break the deadlock over Palestinian representation the PLO will either send this delegation which does not meet U.S. conditions for Palestinian participation, or merely announce the names of the proposed Palestinian delegates.

"We insist on a comprehensive Palestinian participation. We cannot afford to give in on this demand this time," said one PLO official reached by phone in Tunis.

The PLO was seeking to find a compromise as internal Palestinian opposition, especially in the Israeli-occupied territories, appeared to be strong against Palestinian participation at the Moscow talks.

The PLO was still meeting late into the night Sunday and the official said that there was still no final decision. "The overwhelming trend here supports sending a delegation in accordance with our terms and leave it up to the co-sponsors to say yes or no," said the senior PLO official who preferred not to be named.

The U.S. insists that the delegation should be confined to Palestinians from the occupied territories but the PLO says that the multilateral talks will deal with a final settlement and consequently Palestinians everywhere should be represented.

PLO officials in Amman and Tunis insist that eight delegates representing Palestinians inside the occupied territories including

east Jerusalem and in the diaspora should go to Moscow.

The PLO position reflects its fears that the multilateral talks, which will be attended by 17 Arab governments, will lead to normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations without solving the Palestinian problem.

The PLO officials said Sunday that the organisation has failed to secure guarantees from Arab foreign ministers, who met in Morocco over the weekend that no separate normalisation agreements will be struck between any Arab government and Israel prior to achieving progress towards an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

While the final PLO decision could go either way last night the leadership was said to be under immense internal and international pressures pulling it in different directions.

LATE NEWS

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has asked the Palestinian delegation from the occupied territories to stand by to receive a message from the PLO. It is believed that the PLO may authorise the delegation to take part in the multilateral peace talks in Moscow, according to an informed source.

PLO officials in Tunis were reportedly divided on the issue but the majority of Palestinian leaders inside and outside the occupied territories were in favour of Palestinian participation in the Moscow talks.

Ten Damascus-based Palestinian groups have called on Arab governments to boycott the Moscow talks. The Damascus statement, which was also signed by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, represented the first collective position by all groups that opposed the peace talks.

Both the Democratic Front for

the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), (of Nafef Hawatmeh), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) are against the continuation of the peace talks, and their positions is lending weight for Palestinian opposition.

A more significant factor however, has been a strong recommendation by representatives of the Palestinian negotiating team, that has been involved in the process from the beginning, against Palestinian participation in the Moscow talks.

Ghassan Khatib, a member of the Palestinian delegation to the bilateral talks was quoted Sunday as saying that "starting the multilateral talks at this stage will only let Israel lose interest in pushing the bilateral talks forward."

Another delegation member Saeb Ereikat told Radio Monte Carlo that his team has sent a list of recommendations to the PLO leadership on the issue.

Both statements appear to reflect the popular mood inside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as people are reportedly frustrated over lack of progress in bilateral negotiations and amid an intensified Israeli crackdown on Palestinians coupled with intensified settlements building.

The position of the Palestinian delegates followed failure of Palestinian-American negotiations in Washington last week to secure American approval for the representation of Palestinians in the diaspora and from East Jerusalem at the multilateral talks.

Palestinian officials said that Washington has approved the participation of Palestinians from the diaspora, but from East Jerusalem, in subcommittees at a later stage.

If the PLO decided against taking part in the Moscow talks, three major Arab parties, directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, will be absent as Syria and Lebanon have said they would not attend. Jordan has already

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FIS says Algeria leaders seeking civil war

ALGIERS (AP) — Islamic fundamentalists, reeling from a military crackdown on their leaders and publications, accused Algeria's rulers of trying to start a bloody civil war.

"The junta persists in wanting to make the blood of the people run, seeking pretexts to drag the people and the army into war..." Rabah Kebir, head of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) political commission, said in a statement on Saturday night.

Security forces pressed ahead with their hunt for FIS militants. A source close to the forces said Mr. Kebir was among "wanted" FIS activists after defying a ban on using mosques for politics.

Mr. Kebir spoke Friday prayers at Kouba mosque where soldiers barred militants from gathering outside. They also

donned off Bab El Oued's Sunna mosque and fired warning shots to disperse militants, eyewitnesses said.

Both are traditional magnets for thousands of Friday worshippers who come to hear their leaders' strategy for putting Algeria's 25 million people under sharia (Islamic) law.

The FIS — Algeria's most powerful opposition party — has denounced Algeria's new rulers as illegal for preventing it from gaining power at the ballot box.

Police raided the offices of the FIS weekly French-language El Fortikane "to arrest the journalists" at the weekend and stopped printing of its Arabic journal Al Mounqid, a source close to the FIS said.

Both carried a call by temporary leader Abdul Kader Hachani, who, the authorities say, called

for rebellion in the army. He was arrested last Wednesday. The Algerian news agency APS said "trouble-makers" had been identified and were being sought.

Le Matin newspaper said "for the first time the FIS is on the defensive, trying to maintain its political existence."

A foreign diplomat commented: "Both sides are feeling out the opposition."

He forecast the security forces "will crack down for as long as it takes to end political activity in the mosques."

Algeria's five-man presidency intensified its pressure one month after a general election first ballot gave the FIS a landslide lead. North Africa's first such experiment in multiparty democracy was cancelled before the second ballot.

4 Palestinians found killed near West Bank village

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The bodies of four young Palestinians were found Sunday in the occupied West Bank, and a PLO "enforcement squad" announced it killed them as suspected collaborators with Israel, Arab reports said.

It was the biggest known killing of suspected collaborators since the start of the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation four years ago.

An army statement said three bodies were found of men age 19-20 who were kidnapped by masked men and shot to death on suspicion of collaborating. The army said it was checking the report of a fourth death.

The army clamped a curfew on the village and conducted searches for the attackers, Arab reports said.

Palestinian sources gave Reuters a different account of the incident in Kufur Rai village near the West Bank town of Jenin. They said four Palestinians were shot dead overnight and their bodies found together on a road leading to Kufur Rai.

"This morning at about 7:30 a.m. three bodies were found on the access road to Kufur Rai near Jenin. From initial checks, the bodies are youths aged 19-20 who are relatives and all residents of

Kufur Rai," a military source said. "They apparently were killed by masked people and were tortured to death on suspicion of collaborating with Israel," the source said.

Palestinian activists in a four-year-old uprising against Israeli rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip often mask their faces with a chequered Arab head-dress or kuffiyeh.

A group identified as the Revolutionary Security Apparatus claimed responsibility for the killings in broadcasts on mosque loudspeakers in Kufur Rai, saying the victims had collaborated with Israeli security forces.

Palestinians said the group was an offshoot of the Black Panthers linked to the mainstream PLO Fatah faction headed by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Palestinian journalists and residents said the four had been shot dead overnight and Israeli soldiers collected their bodies on Sunday morning.

The army clamped a curfew on Kufur Rai where the shooting occurred and raided homes on Sunday morning. Palestinians said.

Palestinians identified the four dead as Imad Mardawan, 18, Nasser Rajib, 22, Nasser Hasan, 23, and Raed Abu Rashid, 24.

Israeli soldier, 3 Lebanese fighters killed in S. Lebanon

TYRE, Lebanon (AP) — An Israeli soldier and three Muslim fighters were killed in a midday gun battle Sunday near Israel's self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon, security sources said.

Another Israeli soldier was wounded in the 30-minute machine-gun clash between the villages of Srobbeen and Beit Leef, on the northern edge of the security zone, said the sources, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Israeli military confirmed the casualties. An army statement said the soldiers were involved "in routine activities" in the security zone and "caught up with a guerrilla ring."

The Islamic Resistance Front claimed responsibility for what it called an ambush. But the group mentioned no casualties among its fighters.

It said in a statement distributed in the southern port city of Tyre that the Israelis launched search operations throughout the area after the attack on a foot patrol. It gave no other details of the gun battle.

The security sources confirmed the Israeli action. They said a few hours after the incident, a 75-man force of Israeli troops and allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen, backed by two helicopter gunships, punched on foot north of their zone into the villages of Srobbeen, Haris and

Yater and gunned suspected guerrilla routes.

The three adjacent hamlets are policed by Nepalese soldiers of the U.N. peace-keeping force deployed in South Lebanon since 1978.

The sources said the force withdrew six hours later at around 2 p.m. (1200 GMT) under heavy artillery converge from nearby Israeli and SLA positions.

Police reported no casualties. "They said three civilian houses in Haris were destroyed in the barrage,"

United Nations sources said, three Nepalese positions came under 120mm artillery fire but none of the peace-keepers was hurt.

U.N. sources said earlier their headquarters was in contact with the Israeli military seeking to halt the Israeli operations north of the security zone.

The U.N. police zone overlaps the Israeli-occupied sector. Some 200 Nepalese soldiers of the 5,000-strong U.N. force are deployed in the area where Sunday's attack occurred.

The Islamic Resistance Front is dominated by the pro-Iranian Hezbollah, or party of God, and has been stepping up its attack on the Israeli-occupied sector in recent months.

Israel established the 1,100-square-kilometres zone in 1985 as a buffer against guerrilla attacks on northern Galilee settlements.

Taya emerges winner

NOUAKCHOTT, Mauritania (AP) — Military ruler Col. Maouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya has emerged as the apparent winner of presidential elections marked by scattered violence and accusations of cheating on all sides.

Security forces patrolled the capital as the returns began rolling in from Friday's election, the first multiparty vote in this north-west African nation of about 2 million people.

In one part of the capital, police fired tear gas at supporters of the leading challenger, Ahmed Ould Daddah, who were awaiting election returns. Reporters later saw 25 people with injuries at the national hospital.

Results from all but one town gave Col. Taya 62.3 per cent of the vote. Mr. Daddah, a former minister in the country's first post-independence government, got 33.1 per cent. Col. Taya needs 50 per cent of the vote to avoid a run-off election.

Two other opposition candidates collected just over a 4 per cent between them, and the remaining ballots were left blank, election officials said.

Only 48 per cent of 1.2 million registered voters cast ballots, officials said. Earlier reports estimated 85 per cent turnout, although some of the country's black minority had charged they were prevented from voting.

Mr. Daddah said he rejected the results.

"This election has not been honest or just. The results do not reflect reality nor the aspirations of Mauritania," Mr. Daddah told a news conference.

Col. Taya, who seized power in 1981, is accused by the opposition of holding the elections to legitimise his military rule and win foreign aid.

Col. Taya is from the country's dominant Moorish population, and Mr. Daddah is supported by many of the country's minority blacks. Human rights organisations charge that blacks have been brutally oppressed by Col. Taya.

Mr. Daddah is also supported by a variety of groups united only in their opposition to Col. Taya — including Moorish intellectuals and Islamic fundamentalists.

All sides have accused their opponents of massive cheating, ranging from using false voter registration cards to registering people under the voting age of 18 or using names of dead voters.

German legislators Rudolf Krause and Klaus Kluebler, who observed the elections, told reporters that badly compiled election lists prevented many people from voting, and others appeared to have voted more than once.

They said that in one pro-Daddah area of the capital, 30 of every 1,220 voters was stopped from voting. They refused to say whether they thought mistakes in voting lists were deliberate.

U.S. aided Iraq in '82

NEW YORK (AP) — The Reagan administration decided to give highly classified intelligence to Iraq in the spring of 1982, two years earlier than previously disclosed, a newspaper reported.

The United States also allowed the sale of American-made arms to Baghdad to help Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein avoid defeat in the Iran-Iraq war, the New York Times reported this week.

Assistance from the United States and later the Soviet Union helped Iraq go on to become the regional power that invaded Kuwait in August 1990, sparking the Gulf war, the newspaper quoted officials as saying.

The report by investigative journalist Seymour M. Hersh was attributed to current and former White House, intelligence and State Department officials interviewed over the past two months. It didn't name the officials.

The decision to help Iraq was made after American intelligence agencies warned that Iraq could be overrun by Iran, the Times said. Iran's army was strengthened the year before by covert shipments of American-made weapons.

The Times and other news organisations reported last year that in 1981 the Reagan administration secretly allowed Israel to ship several billion dollars worth of American arms and spare parts

to Iran. Evidence that the United States was helping arm both sides indicates that the administration had more of a hand in the lengthy Iran-Iraq war than previously known. In the early 1980s, the administration insisted that it was neutral in the war.

The Times also reported that secret U.S. assistance to Iraq may have helped the middle Eastern countries obtain the mobile launchers that fired dozens of Scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia during the Gulf war.

The newspaper said that the operations subcommittee of the house committee on agriculture is investigating allegations that the launchers were made for Iraq by an American truck manufacturer.

Other details in the Times report included: — The CIA didn't tell the Senate and House intelligence committees that it was sharing intelligence with Iraq.

— The CIA didn't tell the committees that it allowed American-made arms to be sold to Iraq.

— Middle East specialists believe that then-CIA Director William J. Casey travelled to Baghdad in the early 1980s for secret meetings with his Iraqi counterpart, Saddam's half-brother, Barzan.

Palestinians undecided

(Continued from page 1)

sent its delegation to Moscow.

The PLO was hoping that European countries and China, which will attend the conference, along with Russia as cosponsor, will pressure the U.S. to accept a broader Palestinian participation.

The Russian government, according to statements by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, has expressed understanding of the Palestinian demands during a recent meeting in Moscow between Russian officials and PLO executive committee member Mahmoud Abbas.

Mr. Abbas, better known as

Abu Mazen, has been strongly lobbying against a Palestinian boycott of the talks.

PLO executive committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo, who said that the PLO cannot accept the proposed form of participation, has indicated that a Palestinian team will go to Moscow to further discuss the Palestinian demands. Another option, Palestinian officials said, will be to dispatch an appointed leader of the Palestinian delegation, who is acceptable to the Americans, and leave the rest of the Palestinian seats empty until the issue of representation is resolved.

As one example of restructuring problems, Mr. Pickering saw future disagreement "whether one large country in Latin America has the sole right to represent that part of the world," a possible reference to Brazil.

A "broadly acceptable package for change... in which everybody basically agrees this is the right thing to do," is needed, Mr. Pickering said. Without such a package, it could open a "pandora's box" of bargaining.

Mr. Pickering predicted nuclear non-proliferation and arms reduction would become major Security Council tasks made possible by the end of U.S.-Soviet superpower rivalry.

U.S. sees enlarged Security Council likely

WASHINGTON (AP) — America's U.N. ambassador sees enlargement of the Security Council as likely in a future restructuring of the United Nations.

The United States has long been committed to having the Security Council reflect changes in the world since 1945, but change carries risks, Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering cautions.

"We don't want to have the Security Council all of a sudden beginning to work and then having it wind up in controversy and strife," he told forum at the U.S. capital the past week.

By "beginning to work" he meant the newly effective role of the Security Council in the Gulf crisis and its potential for shouldering heavy new peacekeeping and peacekeeping burdens with the end of U.S.-Soviet rivalry.

President Bush's administration anticipates costly new U.N. peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia and Cambodia and hopes for congressional support on providing the money when it's urgently needed, he said.

He answered questions from the U.N. Association Forum about possible issues at the Jan. 31 Security Council summit in New York, the first meeting of heads of state or government of all countries on the supreme U.N. body.

The five World War II allies, America, Britain, China, France and the Soviet Union, awarded themselves permanent Security Council membership with veto power at the end of the war.

Other council members, originally six and now ten, rotate on a two-year basis. They are currently Austria, Belgium, Ecuador, Hungary, India, Cape Verde, Japan, Morocco, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

Russia has taken the former Soviet seat.

Germany and Japan, defeated in the war but now economic superpowers paying sizeable shares of U.N. operating costs, aspire to eventual permanent membership, along with India, Brazil and some other countries important in terms of geography or population.

A "highly likely" eventual change is a larger Security Council, Mr. Pickering said, "because I don't see any of the veto-wielders either giving up their memberships or their vetoes."

Mr. Pickering said he was loudly laughed down when, "partly in jest, I suggested to both the British and the French... there wasn't need for two seats on the Security Council," now that they're evolving a common foreign policy as members of the European Community.

As one example of restructuring problems, Mr. Pickering saw future disagreement "whether one large country in Latin America has the sole right to represent that part of the world," a possible reference to Brazil.

A "broadly acceptable package for change... in which everybody basically agrees this is the right thing to do," is needed, Mr. Pickering said. Without such a package, it could open a "pandora's box" of bargaining.

Mr. Pickering predicted nuclear non-proliferation and arms reduction would become major Security Council tasks made possible by the end of U.S.-Soviet superpower rivalry.

Military-backed government wields iron-fist in name of democracy

By Elaine Ganley
The Associated Press

ALGIERS, Algeria — After 10 days in power, Algeria's new rulers have used military might and authoritarian tactics to control the Muslim fundamentalist movement — in the name of democracy.

A month after sweeping the preliminary round of the nation's first free parliamentary elections, the fundamentalists' party, the Islamic Salvation Front, is on the run.

On Wednesday, Islamic Salvation Front acting leader Abdel Kader Hachani was arrested, hours after officials banned gatherings outside mosques and vowed to enforce a law prohibiting politics in houses of God.

Warning shots, machine guns and security forces at the ready reminded the faithful of the new ground rules at Friday prayers.

The security forces have made many other arrests, including journalists, more than 100 parliamentary fundamentalists and a handful of outspoken clerics.

The Islamic Salvation Front and other leading parties have

denounced as unconstitutional the actions of the new leaders, who cancelled run-off parliamentary elections the fundamentalists were likely to win.

But many Algerians are grateful to have been spared Islamic rule.

Critics, noting the high abstention rate in the Dec. 26 first-round elections, point out that only one in four Algerians actually voted for the Islamic Salvation Front, though the fundamentalists won overwhelmingly.

"It was supposed to be a vote for representation (in parliament) and suddenly it became a choice between two different projects for society," said Hajd-Ali Smail of the rally for artists, intellectuals and scientists.

Defenders of the government also cite the lack of democratic experience in a nation ruled since independence from France in 1962 as a one-party state.

"Algeria conquered democracy. We're not going to let it go now," said Abene Ben Youssef, a founding member of the National Committee for the Safeguarding of Algeria, one of many groups lending support to the

new rulers. Despite the deployment of security forces since the Jan. 11 resignation of president Chadli Benjedid, life in the capital has remained oddly normal.

Except for the showdown at Friday prayers, there has been little evidence of the standoff between authorities and fundamentalists, so far confined to security operations and declarations in the press.

But there is no sign the crackdown will abate. Authorities have suggested they will tighten a law forbidding political parties based exclusively on religion, language or racism.

They also could begin taking mosques away from salvation front control, replacing militant clerics and breaking up an elaborate system of benevolent organisations under the movement's control.

The ruling high state committee also says it will move to benefit the one in five Algerians who are jobless. The woeful economy is considered to have helped build the fundamentalists' popularity.



Veiled Algerian women walk through the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) stronghold of Bab El Oued as special forces in tanks maintain security before Friday prayers in Algiers.

Questions remain about Gulf war

BASRA, Iraq (R) — When U.S. missiles struck the Al-Haritha power plant on the first night of the Gulf war, the lights went out for 1.5 million people. The water stopped running. So did the pumps that suck up raw sewage.

Basra, Iraq's second-biggest city, soon came close to drowning in its own filth.

"Al-Haritha ceased operating," said Mohammad Meki, chief engineer of the biggest power plant in southern Iraq. "It was completely incapacitated. So, we thought that would be it, there would be no further attacks. But they came back and struck again, and again, and again."

"Thirteen times in all. Why?" A year after the Gulf war, key questions about its conduct remain unanswered and the Haritha plant outside Basra could serve as an example of what critics in the United States have termed excessive force against civilian installations.

According to engineering at the plant, missiles hit all four steam boilers, the water treat-

ment system and the administration building in the opening attack on Jan. 17.

Subsequent raids demolished fuel and water storage tanks, control rooms, the water cooling system and transformers. A hit on the air raid shelter killed seven employees.

"The final raid came on Feb. 28, half an hour before the ceasefire," Mr. Meki said. "By then, most of the facility was scrap metal."

Most of it still is. But in 11 months of reconstruction, workers salvaged enough pieces from three wrecked generators to patch up the fourth. "We are ready to go. The only thing missing to start producing power is one transformer," Mr. Meki said. "And we cannot get that."

The missing transformer, made in Japan by the Mitsubishi company, is subject to tight economic sanctions imposed on Iraq for invading Kuwait in August 1990.

Although no other power station was hit as often as Al Haritha, allied raids left Iraq with-

out power, causing months of severe hardship for most of the country's 18 million people.

About three quarters of Iraq's electrical capacity has been restored, officials say. International health experts believe post-war blackouts contributed to a sharp increase in infectious diseases and infant deaths.

Iraqi officials believe that targeting the electricity system was meant to send the country back to the 19th century and leave it there.

A New York-based human rights group, Middle East Watch, suggested in a 402-page report on the Gulf war last November that knocking out the power system may have violated the 1949 Geneva conventions.

"Did they (allied commanders) assure themselves that the civilian costs (of crippling the electricity system) were not 'excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated'?" the report asked.

Such disproportionate force is proscribed in two articles of the

Geneva conventions. Middle East Watch noted that attacks on power stations continued even after General Norman Schwarzkopf, the U.S. commander in the Gulf, said the allies had no intention of destroying all of Iraq's electrical power "because of our interest in making sure that civilians did not suffer unduly..."

For Iraqi electricity experts, such questions are academic. "Once would have been enough if the idea was to deprive Basra of power for the duration of the war," Mr. Meki said.

"From a practical point of view, there was no need for 13 attacks."

And the spare parts embargo may yet cripple Iraq's electricity system permanently.

"Eventually," said the technical manager of a petrochemical factory near Basra, "the power system, along with the rest of our industry, will simply fade out if the sanctions continue. We just won't be able to go on with patchwork repairs forever."

Israel's Levy calls for ties with India

PEKING (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy urged India to follow China's example by resisting Arab pressure and establishing ties with the Jewish state.

The Indian government must make up for lost time," Mr. Levy said at the end of a five-day visit to Peking to set up diplomatic ties.

"You have to act exactly as China did and exactly as the former Soviet Union did... by establishing full diplomatic relations with Israel," he told a news conference before leaving for Russia to attend Middle East

peace talks. Mr. Levy will become the highest-ranking Israeli cabinet member to visit Moscow.

Israel has tried for years to persuade China, India and other Asian countries to grant it diplomatic recognition — a struggle hampered by traditional Asian support for the Palestinian cause.

China, keen to play a role in the U.S. and Russian-backed Middle East peace process, finally agreed to links and signed the diplomatic protocol last Friday.

Israeli officials say India, also eager for a Middle East role,

cannot be far behind. Senior officials in New Delhi said last week they were waiting for the right moment to announce India's recognition of Israel, and the foreign ministry had already approved the exchange of ambassadors.

Israel already maintains a consulate in Bombay.

"What is good for Russia and China is also good for other countries," said Moshe Yegar, deputy director general of the Israeli foreign ministry and part of Mr. Levy's party.

"Any country that expects to

take part in negotiations must have equal relations with all countries."

China, which announced it would take part in the Moscow talks, has said it hopes to push forward the peace process.

Mr. Levy took part on Sunday in a ceremony to put a plaque at the new Israeli embassy in Peking, the fruit of years of diplomatic manoeuvring by the Jewish state.

Apart from China, Israel has diplomatic links in Asia with Japan, Singapore, Thailand and Burma.

Hodeiby: Brotherhood will seek peaceful path to power

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — Algeria's crackdown on its Muslim movement may lead to violence worldwide by Islamic groups pressing demands for Islamic rule, a leader of Egypt's mainstream fundamentalists warned Saturday.

But the Muslim Brotherhood's Mamoun Al Hodeiby said his organisation will remain peaceful "as of now" in trying to bring about Sharia, or Muslim law, and establish an Islamic state in Egypt.

The Brotherhood has been the target of several official crackdowns in a turbulent 63-year history.

Egyptian authorities blamed it for an attempt to assassinate then-President Gamal Abdul Nasser in 1954 and banned it.

The ban remains on the books. But the government has tolerated the group since Nasser's successor Anwar Sadat freed many members from prisons in the mid-1970s. Brotherhood leaders banned violence and have disavowed terror done in the name of Islam, including Sadat's assassination in 1981.

In 1984 and 1987, President Hosni Mubarak, who succeeded Mr. Sadat, allowed the Brotherhood to run for parliament on

election tickets headed by legal political parties.

Mr. Al Hodeiby, 71, a retired judge, spoke to Cairo-based foreign correspondents. Most questions sought the Brotherhood's view of this month's political upheaval in Algeria, where a military-dominated government deprived the Islamic Salvation Front of a parliamentary election victory and several restricted its activities.

"What happened in Algeria is a message to all Islamic organisations in the world, including Egypt," Mr. Al Hodeiby said. "The message is that the road to

peaceful change is blocked with tanks and cannons, which means that these organisations must consider pursuing other means."

"If the peaceful option remains blocked, the way to violence may be opened. Its proponents will become ideals and heroes."

Mr. Al Hodeiby appeared circumspect about whether the Egyptian Brothers would eschew its non-violent code.

"Algeria has given us food for thought, but as of now I believe that we will find a peaceful method to emerge from our dilemma," he said.

"We hope the Egyptian people

will not look upon the advocates of force as ideals."

He took issue with a 1977 law banning religious parties, saying it conflicts with Islam's constitutional role as Egypt's state religion.

Egypt's 56 million people include close to six million Coptic Christians, almost double the government's estimate of about three million.

"Is it logical or conceivable that five per cent of the population (Copts) would seek to rule the 95 per cent Muslim majority?" Mr. Al Hodeiby asked.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Le Monde Sous Marin de Jacques-Yves Cousteau
19:00 News in French
19:15 Weekly Sports Magazine
20:00 News in Hebrew
20:30 News in Arabic
21:00 Comedy
21:30 Capital City
22:00 News in English
22:30 The Elite

PRAYER TIMES

05:08 Fajr
06:28 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:48 Dhuhr
14:43 'Asr
17:48 Maghrib
18:28 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifich Tel. 610740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623683, Tel. 626543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Assyrian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be cold and dry with frost formation in most areas in the early morning. Winds will be southerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman -2 / 10
Aqaba 4 / 16
Djersa -5 / 10
Jordan Valley 0 / 15

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 9, Aqaba 15. Humidity readings:

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Nazzari 693925
Dr. Mohammad Abu Zaid 675480
Dr. Bassem Oudoudi 646024
Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507
Firas pharmacy 661912
Al Asma pharmacy 778396
Nasrallah pharmacy 627055
Nasrallah pharmacy 623672
Al Salhan pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Tawfi (—)
Al Shamsi pharmacy 275825

ZARQA:
Dr. Abid Ghazal (—)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 603900
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 767111
Complaints 767111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 623662
Malha, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 6641714
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushtaq Hospital 6672779
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Asli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Mubajres 771012
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marja 891611/15
Queen Abla Hospital 602249/50
Amal Hospital 674135
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

ZARQA NATIONAL HOSPITAL

(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775

Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:15 Beirut (ME)

13:05 Cairo (MS)

14:15 Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg

Apple (red) 700 / 700

Apple (yellow) 500 / 500

Arabs meet today to discuss growing Jewish threat

CAIRO (Petra) — Representatives of the Arab countries hosting Palestinian refugees, including Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), will hold a meeting here today to discuss Jewish immigration to Palestine, the escalation of settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories, Judaisation of the Arab city of Jerusalem and Israeli violations of human rights.

Participants will adopt a strategy aimed at helping the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to expand educational and health services offered to the Palestinian refugees in camps as well as the occupied Arab territories. They will urge the world community to increase its contributions to UNRWA to enable it to cope with the increasing demand for its services. The demand was caused by the return of tens of thousands of returnees from the Gulf.

Also taking part in the meeting are representatives for the Arab League General Secretariat and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation.



ROYAL INSPECTION — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday toured the villages of Kharsba and Al Amr in south Mazar and Qasr districts respectively, where she stressed the importance of self-reliance in development. She called for directing special attention to the youth sector, which should play an active role in the development of their communities. Princess Basma pointed out that the intensification of efforts by the public and private sectors is an essential element to develop these communities. Princess Basma stressed the important role local communities can play in making the campaign a success.

The campaign will be launched during the fasting month of Ramadan which falls in early March. The campaign, a yearly event organised by the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund, is aimed at collecting cash and in-kind donations for the needy people in these villages. Food donations were distributed Sunday to some 1,000 families in these villages as part of the charity campaign scheduled for Ramadan. Princess Basma was accompanied on the visit by the governor of Karak, provincial governors and department heads in Karak Governorate.

Water recycling strategies needed, experts say at conference

By Nur Sati

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan should implement water recycling and other sources of water management that are economically feasible now that it has a severe shortage of water and the country's resources are being rapidly depleted; an official from the Metito Group of Companies said at the end of a two-day conference on water desalination and management.

The conference between Jordanian specialists and Metito — a water treatment and pollution control company that is well entrenched in the Middle East — was designed to seek new proposals in alternative methods of water consumption. Despite widespread discussions between experts and officials, Jordanian authorities were not convinced that building water desalination plants are the solutions to Jordan's problem.

"Jordan is aware of the size of its problem and it is very eager to solve it," said Farouk Ghandour, chairman of Metito, who believes that water desalination or water recycling are probably the only solutions for Jordan.

Mr. Ghandour pointed out that Jordan's water network has "something around the neighbourhood of a 30 per cent loss."

One of the proposals Metito forwarded to the Jordanians was how domestic users of water can save up to 40 per cent of their consumption with-

out altering their lifestyles. The Metito recycling system proposed for Jordan at the conference collects wash water, bath and laundry water and treats it, Mr. Ghandour said.

"This water is then directed to the water closet which consumes 40 per cent of the water in the household," he told the Jordan Times. The water will be reused rather than just once.

Dr. Maan Dibouni, a Metito official, added that for a country with a population of four million, water waste reaches about 400,000 cubic metres per day. "Aside from being wasteful, this practice causes severe problems both in supplying the household with enough water and in disposing of large volumes of waste water leaving the house," he said.

Despite Jordanian officials' hesitancy, specifically because of the cost in building a water desalination plant, conference participants said Jordan may eventually be forced to build a plant.

The plant is feasible in Jordan if the cost is affordable, Mr. Ghandour said. He added that by using reverse osmosis, comparatively speaking, the cost is low when compared with other methods of solving the water shortage problem.

However, if "we want to desalinate sea water, that is establishing the plant at Aqaba) it could cost double the amount in the sense that we have to pump the water all the way through to Amman,"

he added.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kassar said Saturday that purification or desalination of water for domestic, industrial and irrigation purposes can be costly. The minister added that Jordan is taking the necessary measures to protect existing water sources from pollution and are searching for ways to affordably recycle water which the country might resort to should the need arise.

Amal Hijazi, a participant in the conference, said that Jordan mostly uses well water, which does not require treatment.

"But because of the overuse and depletion of that water, Jordan has to look for recycling methods," she said.

Mr. Hijazi also said that the desalination plant at Aqaba is not the only solution for Jordan. "There are a lot of areas, especially in the desert areas, where there is a lot of brackish water (water containing a significant amount of dissolved salts) to make it unsuitable to drink and impossible for normal agricultural use) and where reverse osmosis is viable for it."

Mr. Ghandour, again pointing out the eventual necessity and advantages of desalination, said the process offers high quality clean water.

"The process takes a matter of seconds and ensures 99 per cent purity from salty water," Mr. Ghandour said. "Using reverse osmosis, we are merely duplicating what nature does."

Importance of vocational training to be stressed, official says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education has set up a committee chaired by the Director of General Education Dr. Thounan Obaidat to prepare a new plan to spread awareness among tenth grade students about vocational training.

In past few years, the Ministry of Education has been directing students' attention towards vocational rather than academic courses with a view to meeting the country's growing need for skilled manpower. Dr. Obaidat told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that at the tenth grade, students are normally chosen for the different types of learning. It is then that the committee's work is needed to direct students towards the various specialisations.

A special campaign is to be launched through the media and on television to spread awareness among students advising them on appropriate training courses they can benefit from, he said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education Sunday issued a statement noting that it built 259 school buildings in the past year. The director of the Department of Buildings and Projects, Abdul Razzak Al Maani, told Petra that the schools were built in towns, villages, and the rural regions of the Kingdom in implementation of 1987 National Educational Conference resolutions.

In addition, the ministry last year completed the construction of 59 school libraries, 63 laboratories and 82 workshops for vocational training courses at schools.

In the last two scholastic years, government schools admitted a total of 75,000 new students, mostly expatriates returning from the Gulf, forcing the ministry to retain rented buildings and the two-shift school system to cope with the increase, Mr. Maani noted.

In the first quarter of 1992, the ministry will complete the construction of 100 more schools at the cost of JD 70 million, he said. The projects will be partly financed by a Japanese loan and partly by a loan from the World Bank, said Mr. Maani.

In addition, he said, the ministry has allocated an additional JD 6 million to build annexes to schools totalling 1,360 classrooms.

Increased production, Ramadan will alleviate shortage of eggs, minister says

AMMAN (J.T.) — The present shortage of table eggs in Jordanian markets will ease in a few weeks with the coming of the spring, when production normally increases and with the advent of the holy month of Ramadan when people tend to consume cooked food only, according to Minister of Agriculture Fayez Khasawneh.

Jordan normally produces 55 million table eggs a month and consumes 45 million, leaving 10 million in surplus for export, the minister said in remarks about current complaints in the local

press and the public about the shortage of table eggs.

The Ministry of Agriculture is not issuing any licences for exporting eggs in view of the shortages, the minister said in his statement to the Jordan News Agency Petra.

Reports in the local press had said that the high cost of eggs production input like corn, whose price rose from JD 50 to JD 106 a tonne and soybeans from JD 100 in 1988 to JD 230 at present, were the main reason for the shortages. The high cost of animal feed, they said, discouraged

many of the farmers from pursuing this business.

A packet of 30 eggs which used to sell for JD 1.10 now sells for at least JD 1.40, according to the reports.

In the coming month of Ramadan, which is due to start by March 5, the country will have sufficient amounts of meat and there will be no problem in the markets, the minister added.

He said that Jordan will continue to import red meat in view of the poor local production, which covers only 25 per cent of the local markets' needs.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King pays tribute to Abdul Majid

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday sent a cable of condolence to Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid on the death of former Arab League Secretary General Mahmoud Riad. Mr. Riad, an Egyptian critic of his country's peace with Israel, died Friday in Cairo at the age of 75 and was buried Sunday. In his cable, King Hussein paid tribute to the late Mr. Riad, noting that his life was marked by his diligent work to serve his home country and the Arab and Islamic Nation at large. Mr. Riad privately opposed the peace treaty signed in 1979, but had to resign his Arab League post after member states suspended Egypt and decided to move the league headquarters from Cairo to Tunis. King Hussein delegated Jordan's ambassador to Egypt Nabih Al Nimer to convey his condolences to the family of Mr. Riad.

Deputy meets with U.S. ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Abdul Majid Shreidah received in his office at the Parliament building Sunday U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison. The meeting reviewed cooperation between Jordan and the U.S. and developments in the region and the world.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ☆ Art exhibition by Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan and Italian ambassador to Jordan Franco de Courten at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ☆ Exhibition of the activities of the Goethe Institute in Amman at the institute, Jabal Amman.
- ☆ Exhibition of paintings by Alia Shanti Amoura at Alia Art Gallery.
- ☆ Art exhibition by Kamal Jawhari at the British Council.

THEATRE

- ☆ Arabic play entitled "Galgamesh" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

1,500 engineers stage sit-in, demand better pay, treatment

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An estimated 1,500 Jordanian engineers held a four hour sit-in outside the Ministry of Public Works Sunday to protest continuing salary inequities they claim has reduced government employed engineers' living standards close to the poverty line. Government-employed engineers from all ministries as well as private sector engineers took part in the sit-in, demanding that the government meet their demand for salary hikes. The participants at the sit-in, supported by the Jordanian Engineers Union, are threatening to call a one day nationwide strike Wednesday if the government fails to address their demands.

If the strike fails to "produce a change in government policy, then an open-ended strike could be called" union leaders said Sunday.

"We don't want a confrontation with the government," said union leader Ismail Breiwish, "but we want our rights and we will strike to get them."

Some amendments have already been made in the salary regulations for engineers working in the government sector, said Mr. Breiwish, who is president of the Engineers Association.

"However, the changes can only be applied to new employees and our aim is improve the conditions of those already working," Mr. Breiwish added.

The dispute, which began when salary allotments were changed back in 1987, centres on two technical issues. Previously an engineer from the private sector was given only half the credit that a governmental engineer was given when experience was accredited in the governmental sector. A recent decision by the Ministry of Public Works invalidated this decision, equalizing the number of years regardless of which sector the experience was earned in.

However, the decision is only applicable to newly-appointed engineers and not ones already working. The engineers, with strong backing from the Engineering Associa-

tion, say they want the new regulations to be applied to those already working.

"The engineers who are working in the government, which number over 1,000, have a right to have their salaries regulated according to the number of years of experience and their specialisations," said Mr. Breiwish in an interview with the Jordan Times.

Specialised allotments are the second point of contention between the union and the government. Before 1987, when the government changed salary allotment regulations, engineers were given a JD 30 increase every three years as an inflation allowance plus a fixed percentage for their respective technical expertise. These allowances were halted in a decision made in 1987.

Today, engineers are demanding that the previous allowances and new ones be added to their salaries.

"Government-employed engineers are living too close to the poverty line, it's a shame," said one private-sector engineer who joined his public sector colleagues in solidarity.

Meanwhile, Minister of Public Works Saad Hayel Surour was quoted Sunday in the Arabic press as saying that there was no justification for the sit-in because most of the demands by the engineers were "negotiable."

Some observers at the sit-in claimed that the Ministry of Public Works had warned its engineers not to join the sit-in, threatening them with suspension of work.

"Most of them joined anyway. No government can ignore the demands of 1,500-2,000 engineers. They will have to meet us at least half way," concluded one union leader at the sit-in.

No immediate comment from the Ministry of Public Works was available.

Late Sunday, the Lower House of Parliament, meeting under the chairmanship of Dr. Abdul Latif Arabiyat, called on the government to respond to the engineers' demands. The House's session was attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the Cabinet ministers.

Lower House condemns threats on Libya

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday declared its absolute solidarity with the Libyan people in the face of a hostile propaganda campaign launched by the United States and its allies.

In a statement, the Lower House condemned the double standard dealings practiced by the Western countries against nations of the world, demanding that the U.N. Security Council serve as a forum for justice and fair dealings among world nations and not as a tool for aggression, and political blackmail.

The statement cited earlier incidents in which the U.S. destroyed an Iranian civilian aircraft and another in which Israel shot down a Libyan civilian airliner over Sinai, noting that the United States condoned such actions along with all of Israel's acts of aggression on the Arab World.

"The United States and its Western allies are pursuing an aggressive and conspiratorial course of action against Arab and Third World countries in order to achieve their own selfish purposes," the statement noted. It said that these Western allies are exploiting the Security Council as a tool to stifle the voice of nations

aspiring to self determination and sovereignty in their own homeland.

The recent U.N. Security Council resolution directed against Libya was the most notorious proof of such policies, the statement added.

History is full of barbaric and terrorist actions committed by the United States and its Western allies against countries. The aggression on Iraq and its people as well as those committed against Panama, Grenada and Libya two years ago stand out as proof of such barbarism, the statement pointed out.

The Libyan government has sought cooperation with various nations to clear the mystery around the 1988 Pan Am air crash over Scotland and the French plane crash simply because no Arab can condone any attack on a civilian airliner and the loss of innocent human life, the statement continued.

As Libya is willing to cooperate in organising an international tribunal to decide this matter, the U.S. and Britain continue to pursue political blackmail to pave the ground for an armed aggression against that country, the state-

ment said.

The Lower House Sunday issued another statement appealing to Arab countries and international organisations as well as peace-loving nations to help lift sanctions imposed on Iraq. The statement, which was issued to mark the first anniversary of the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq, condemned the sanctions as violating basic human principles and human rights.

The statement described the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq a year ago as the most barbaric action in history, noting that the aggression was designed to stem Iraq's economic, military and scientific development.

By launching the aggression on Iraq, the U.S. has disregarded all international principles and values and committed its actions in the name of international legitimacy under the pretext of liberating Kuwait, said the statement.

In fact, the aggression was designed to pave the way for a U.S.-dominated region enabling the Western powers to continue expansion through Israel, pillaging Arab wealth and controlling the Arab Nation's destiny, the statement added.

Taiwanese delegation tours project sites

AMMAN (Petra) — Taiwan's minister of State for Scientific and Technological Affairs Dr. Kuo Nan-Hung met with Jordanian Cabinet ministers Sunday to discuss scopes of cooperation between Taiwan and Jordan in energy, electricity, natural resources and transport fields.

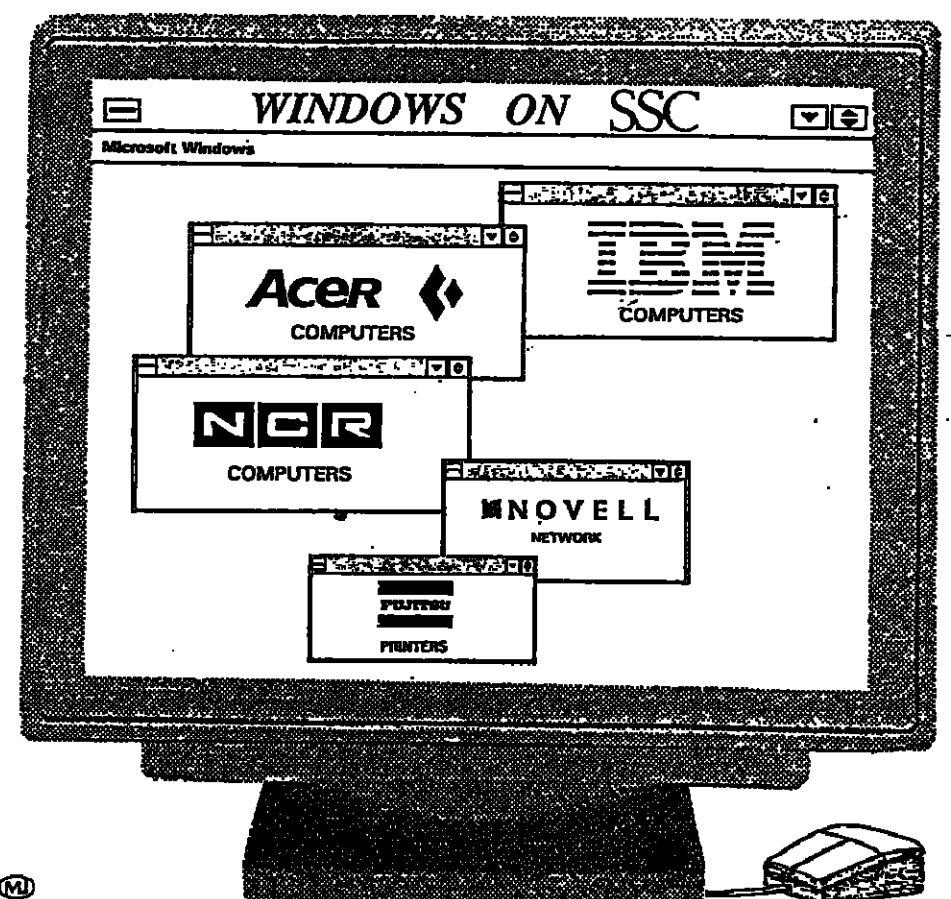
The Taiwanese minister, who is accompanied by a group of specialists serving in different fields, had been invited by the Jordanian government to advise on a number of development projects to be implemented in the Kingdom.

Discussion with Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Ali Abul Ragheb covered energy-related affairs and the prospect of Taiwan financing projects related to the electrification of the rural regions of Jordan, exploring for oil and natural gas and the exploitation of oil shale, which is found in abundance in the country, and the extraction of other mineral resources in the Kingdom.

Taiwanese delegation members were accompanied by officials on a visit to the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) to hear a briefing on its functions. The delegation expressed interest in launching cooperation with Jordan in electrification projects, the manufacture of spare parts for machinery, training of personnel and other related fields.

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Link is a must

THE GOVERNMENT did well earlier this week to issue a public statement urging the U.S. to refrain from assisting Israel in any way that would help its settlement programme in the occupied territories. There has been and there is no reason why we should not tell the Americans how strongly we feel on the issue of loan guarantees and their direct link to Israeli settlements. Furthermore, it was only right and correct to point out to our friends in the U.S. that such assistance also included financial support for the 13,000 housing units started last year but not yet finished and the 5,000 units the Israelis included in the 1992 budget. The fact that the government statement made reference to "any kind of assistance" that would help Israel's settlement activity means that Jordan will not be happy to see the Americans make the linkage on paper only. Nor that we would be content with linking the guarantees with future settlement programmes and forgetting about the 1991 and 1992 plans and budgetary allocations.

To be sure, however, Jordanians had seen positive and encouraging signs when the Bush Administration and the Arabs saw eye to eye on the fundamental issues that surrounded the deportation resolution.

The countless U.N. resolutions on the Palestinian problem describe Israeli usurpation of Arab lands, null and void, period. So from a strictly legal point of view, there can be no doubt that Israel's conquest of Arab lands to house new Jewish immigrants is utterly unlawful. And the illegality of this policy covers not only the future Israeli designs but also the past construction schemes on Arab lands. The Fourth Geneva Convention, which the entire international community agrees that it applies to the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, prohibits altogether past and current Israeli programmes to settle Israelis among the Palestinians. In this sense, Israel must be called upon not only to desist from additional expansionist programme but also to roll back its entire colonisation project that it had embarked upon soon after its occupation of Arab territories.

But above and beyond this argument, it should make a lot of economic sense for the U.S. government to refrain from funding Israeli settlements. With the eyes of the American people increasingly directed to their domestic affairs and their faltering economy, President George Bush would be at pains to explain funneling billions of urgently needed dollars to an Israeli expansionist policy.

It must be recalled also that the multilateral talks being launched in Moscow tomorrow are going to be conducted in anticipation of a firm position from Washington on the Israeli request for loan guarantees. To yield to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's pressure on this pivotal point at this critical hour is bound to send the wrong message to the Arab participants who opted to put their faith and trust in the U.S. leadership on a matter that clearly unites the Arab house. It was no small step to part company with Damascus on participation in the Moscow regional parley, and to comply with Shamir's coercion tactics now would vindicate the Arab side that saw no use in conferring on regional concerns in the absence of any real hope for the success of the peace process.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Sunday echoed His Majesty King Hussein's words, at a meeting Saturday with a delegation representing American Jews, that a durable peace is the one which is only based on international legitimacy. The paper said that since Israel's occupation of Arab lands in 1967, Jordan has based its policies on this concept while continuing the struggle to ensure the liberation of the occupied lands. Any peace imposed by force and that does not cater to the legitimate needs of the Palestinians, said the paper, can never last. King Hussein has made it clear that international legitimacy can by no means go hand in hand with Israel's occupation of Arab land and that the current settlements policy is bound to further complicate matters for the negotiators who aim at arriving at a peace based on justice, said the paper. For this reason, the King has stressed that Israel's settlement programme should stop so that the aspired peace can be reached, the paper added. For peace to be established, the paper added, there can be no alternative to the force of the international community to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions. The present weak Arab stand and the disarray in Arab countries' ranks might tempt the U.S. and Israel to try to impose their version of a peace based on Arab capitulation, but such a peace can never last long, said the paper. It said that unless a just peace has been established, the Middle East will remain open to further cycles of violence, instability and turbulence that might cause further explosions.

A guest columnist in Al Ra'i tackled the social security system in Jordan, criticising its inability to cater to the needs of the public. Abdul Rahim Malhas said that one of the basic tasks of this system, that of ensuring health security for all citizens, remains absent, depriving the public of services most required. The writer said that if a person requires hospitalisation for a week or two he will have to pay a fortune and might remain indebted throughout his entire life. Nearly half-a-million workers, in addition to their families, remain without this vital service pending long and arduous negotiations among the concerned authorities working out a formula by which a health scheme can be applied in the country, said the writer. It is true that the Social Security Corporation (SSC) had announced measures, towards the end of last year to embark on a health security scheme for the entire population of Jordan, but the idea seems to have been shelved following the appointment of the SSC Director Mohammad Al Saqqaf as minister of supply, said the writer. He said that the Health Ministry can by no means shoulder additional burdens and introduce a system which it cannot guarantee. The writer said that unless the government ensures a universal health scheme capable of catering to the health needs of people, the margin of those living below poverty line will continue to widen.

Weekly Political Pulse

Time to set the record straight

"IN retrospect, everyone now concedes that the 1967 war should have never been waged or joined even if the justifications appeared valid at the time. But this is only a historical footnote now. There is no useful purpose in dwelling on events that should have been avoided at all costs so late in the hour. All attention needs to be directed in the direction of the peace process and on what should be done or undone to bolster it and advance its goals. In this vein, I still would like to take issue with the government's 1989 decision to sever all administrative and legal relations with the West Bank and its people. Granted that "historic" resolution was taken with all the best of intentions especially national ones that aimed to advance the cause of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Palestinian desire for identity and an opportunity to speak for themselves in the search for a peaceful resolution of their case. Yet, I still wonder whether that fateful step was taken with full appreciation and recognition of its international law implications and how that eventual course may end up affecting the peace talks between the Arab side and Israel especially the Palestinian dimension of it. I, for one, never thought for a moment that when Amman decided to break all administrative and legal relations with the West Bank it had also meant to cede sovereignty rights to any third party. Had this been the principal objective, Amman would have taken another legislative course to translate this national decision into law by the enactment of the necessary legal measures that would give legal import both domestic and international, to such a step. But the

government omitted purposely to go that far in order to keep basic critical bridges between the two banks still intact.

Yet the legal fallouts from the "breakaway" decision continue to affect or haunt the ongoing negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians as Israel has seized upon it to justify its false allegations that the West Bank is a disputed territory not belonging to any state in a way that international law would recognise. For this untenable position, Tel Aviv relies on Jordan's political interpretation of the 1989 decision to break legal and administrative contacts with the West Bank which I am afraid tended to reinforce the false assumption that the decision was legally taken and in accordance with the Jordanian due process of the law and that its purport was to cede Jordanian sovereignty rights over it.

Since we all know that was never the intention of Amman in the first place, it would be useful even at this late hour to rectify such false illusion and set the record straight. For this purpose, Amman should serve notice on the international community through the United Nations in general and to Israel in particular, that its "action" to break administrative and legal relations with the West Bank and its people was never intended to yield sovereignty rights belonging to Jordan to any side at this early stage and that the requirements of the Jordanian Constitution for arriving at such a solemn decision were never satisfied.

No government or leader can cede sovereignty rights by a declaration or a policy statement and therefore the intention was

never to go that far in the first place. If and when Israel withdraws from the occupied Arab territories, then and only then could Jordan and the Palestinian side enter in bilateral negotiations to give effect to the noble aspiration of the Palestinians for statehood and identity. Till that time, and especially during the peace negotiations between Israel and the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegations, the legal position of Jordan and the PLO should be synchronised and amended to give expression to the legal proposition that administrative and legal separation between Amman and the West Bank has no international law effect. Otherwise, both Jordan and the Palestinian side risk losing all by default and by undermining their strong position with regard to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Of course, this legal presentation is predicated on the assumption that the peace parleys on the Middle East will bear fruit at the end of the tunnel. But even if such talks may never come to fruition, sovereignty rights should never be played around with it so lightly.

It is high time that major national decisions of the country be taken with full cognisance of their international law ramifications. There were many occasions in the past when the central government had made historic verdicts without giving international law due appreciation. Now is the time to reverse such a pattern and the 1989 decision to break legal and administrative relations with the West Bank and its people offers a good starting point to do just that.

Bush dodging political darts to help former Soviet republics

By Gene Gibbons
Reuter

WASHINGTON — With bold symbolism rather than a bundle of cash, President George Bush is striving to reassure the impoverished former Soviet republics they can count on U.S. support as they move towards democracy and free enterprise.

But he is trying at the same time to protect his political flanks from election-year jibes that he should focus all his efforts on hard times at home.

The U.S. Air Force will start

flying 54 humanitarian relief missions to the republics next February 10, just a week before the crucial presidential primary election in New Hampshire where Mr. Bush is opposed by Republican conservative Patrick Buchanan — who runs on an "America first" platform.

The airlift, and Mr. Bush's commitment to ask Congress for \$645 million in new aid for Russia and the other republics, were the main U.S. initiatives at a conference on aid to the former Soviet Union in Washington this week. Mr. Buchanan has told a cam-

paign audience the proposals were well-meaning, "but let me tell you, we're never going to see that money again."

The former Nixon White House speechwriter also said that Mr. Bush seemed to be more adept at fashioning economic programmes for the former Soviet Union than his own country.

"The amounts of money involved are very modest," said Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a Soviet expert at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think-tank. "The big issue that still faces us and

other Western countries is an economic stabilisation fund."

Such a fund would form a pool of international currencies from major industrial countries to be used for buying the rouble in times of speculative selling should the currency be allowed to float in value on world markets.

In a Washington Post editorial page article, Gennady Burbulis, Russia's deputy prime minister, said Russia alone needed seven billion dollars to finance hard currency imports and create a fund to stabilise the rouble's glob-

al value.

The United States and its group of seven partners — Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Japan — rejected Moscow's bid for a stabilisation fund late last year but left the door open to further consideration of the issue.

It is expected to arise when Mr. Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin meet next weekend at Camp David, the U.S. presidential retreat in the Maryland mountains.

Administration officials said the assistance Mr. Bush pledged this week was easily defensible politically because the food and medicine involved in the airlift were supplies left over from the Gulf war.

"It would just go to waste if it didn't go to the former Soviet Union because transportation costs and the short shelf life of the material make it imprudent to bring it home," one official said.

He also noted most of the \$645 million would be spent in the United States for exports to the republics giving the U.S. economy something of a shot in the arm.

Mr. Bush said on Wednesday that domestic economic problems notwithstanding, the United States had an "economic stake" in promoting political and economic stability in the republics.

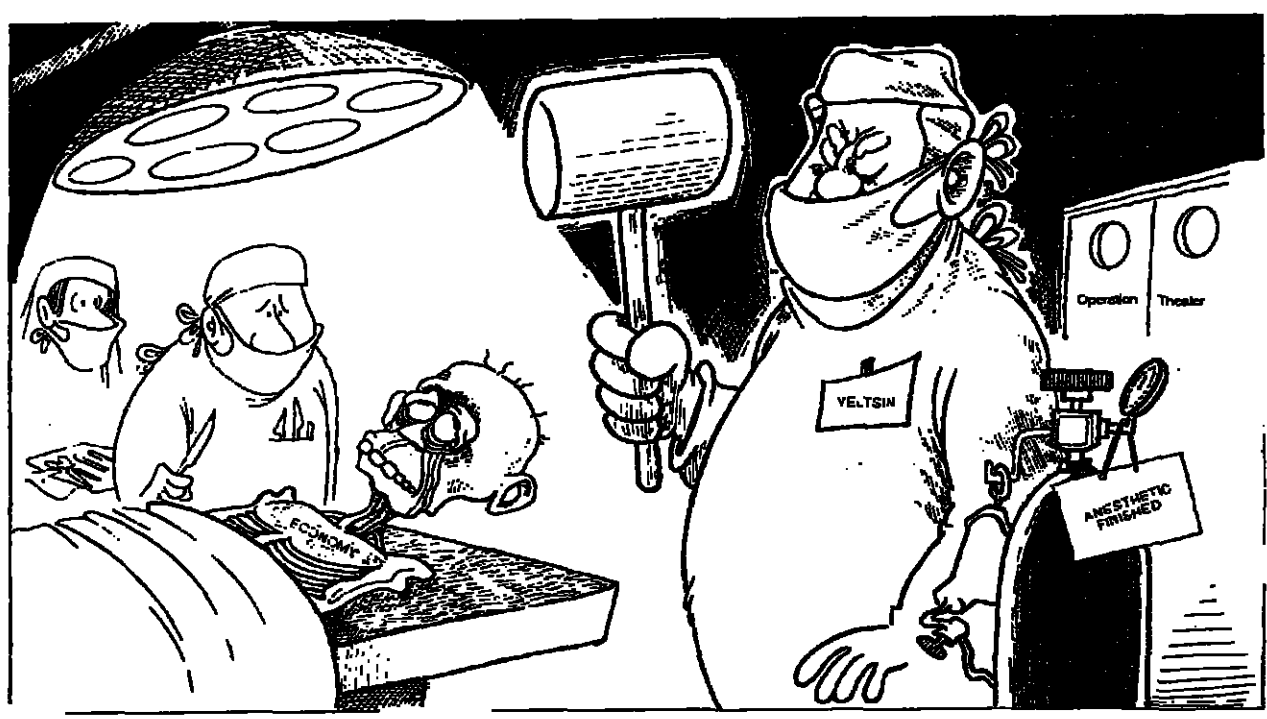
"Isn't it better to send some money to help people who are hungry or perhaps need medical attention than it is to ever increasing your nuclear weapons, one against another?" he asked.

Mr. Bush is expected to announce dramatic new cutbacks in the U.S. nuclear arsenal as a result of the diminished threat from the east in his State of the union address next Tuesday.

"There is no better investment today in our security" than to try to ensure that totalitarianism does not revive in the former Soviet Union, said an administration official.

Even so, the White House was careful to assure symmetry on the domestic front.

The day before the new U.S. aid commitment to the republics was announced, Mr. Bush said he would seek \$600 million in new funds for head start, a politically popular pre-school programme for underprivileged children.



M. KAHIL

Cyprus, the Aegean and an uneasy alliance

By Wes Jonasson

THE collapse of a year-long effort by the Greek and Cypriot governments to convene a U.N. conference to resolve the problem of a divided Cyprus has once again brought into focus the fact that Turkey and Greece are the most uneasy of NATO allies with conflicting claims in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Although Washington views this strategic triangle of sea lanes, air corridors and military facilities as part of its vital underpinning for the Middle East, its inclination to "tilt" towards Turkey has had a jarring effect in Athens that bids fair to fuel regional tensions — reflecting the fact that the potential for military conflict between the two countries is never fully out of sight. With the Warsaw Pact having evaporated and the Balkans looking back to the old, regional rivalries, it is virtually certain that Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis voiced this concern to President Bush during his official visit to Washington on Dec. 16.

The hopes of Mr. Mitsotakis and Cypriot President George Vassiliou had been buoyed by the U.N. resolutions on Iraq and Kuwait, and with the Paris Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar calling for an end to the problem, international opinion was, in fact, swinging their way. Hence, by mid-summer, Athens and Nicosia hoped for decisive support from President Bush during his July 18-22 visit to the area. Mr. Bush's remarks were somewhat Delphic in Athens, suggesting that the U.S. serve as a

"catalyst" to help solve the problem: in Ankara he clearly and unexpectedly endorsed Turkish President Turgut Ozal's position that Greek and Turkish Cypriots sit and negotiate alongside the Greeks and the Turks in a four-sided affair. In fact, Mr. Bush's follow-on call for a conference by September caused some to suspect that Turkey and the United States wanted a quick "fix" at the expense of the Cypriot government.

The prospect that an internationally unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), comprising 18 per cent of the population, backed by 30,000 Turkish troops and occupying 30 per cent of the island, should be accorded equal status with the Republic of Cyprus was and is a galling proposition for Greeks and Greek Cypriots. The real low, however, was reached at a meeting in Paris in September when Turkish Premier Mesut Yilmaz stone-walled Mr. Mitsotakis by refusing to discuss territory, the return of approximately 200,000 Greek Cypriot refugees to their homes in the north, and the status of around 50,000 Anatolian settlers in northern Cyprus — the real crux of the problem.

Following this, and Mr. Ozal's decision to hold early elections, the probability of a conference receded even further. With the situation finally arriving at an impasse, Mr. De Cuellar blamed the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş, for his repeated insistence on virtual sovereignty, and, by implication, Ankara for the lack of progress. Although United Nations Security Council Resolution 716 said as much, this affords scant satisfaction to

Athens and Nicosia.

National security and the military balance

Subsequent to this imbroglio and the election of veteran politician Suleyman Demirel as Turkey's new prime minister, Turkish air force jets have repeatedly violated Greek and Cypriot air space and Mr. Demirel himself has wasted little time in renewing charges that Greece's Aegean islands are ill-gained and that Greece is guilty of repressing its Muslim minority in Western Thrace — reminding Greeks that its land border with Turkey on the east and its frontier of island strongholds hard up against the Turkish mainland are held in place only by a paper signed at Lausanne in 1923. Because of these enduring antagonisms, Greek defence policy has always seen its major threat coming from Turkey, not from the Warsaw Pact. In recent memory, Greeks and Turks have been close to war in 1964, 1967 and 1974 over Cyprus and over territorial claims in the Aegean in 1987. A recent Greek poll overwhelmingly cites Aegean security as the country's leading national issue.

The U.S. has tried through the years to keep its two allies from each other's throats and has managed a 10:7 ratio of military assistance in favour of Ankara. U.S. military grants amount to \$500 million a year for Turkey and \$350 million for Greece. Both augment their armaments from gifts and purchases from other NATO nations.

With an armed force structure of close to 600,000, Turkey is undergoing a \$10 billion modernisation programme that

should give it a smaller, highly mechanised army. It reportedly plans to buy 800 U.S. M-60 and A-3 tanks and is co-producing F-16 fighter aircraft. For the past decade Greece has maintained the highest per capita expenditure in NATO to field a force roughly one third that of Turkey's. Defence experts maintain that up until the mid-'80s Greece's strained relations with the U.S. and mismanagement of its arms industry in recent years have caused the balance to tip the other way.

Since the end of the cold war, Greece and Turkey have both begun to court Bulgaria, which shares common border and much tangled history. In July, Mr. Mitsotakis suggested troop reductions and the withdrawal of offensive weapons from the area — proposing that Greek forces should withdraw west to the Nestos River, the Bulgarian north, and the Turks to the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus. After a month of studied silence, Ankara replied that it would not agree as long as Greece continued to fortify its Aegean islands.

Albeit, the proposal has apparently found favour in Sofia, and the newly appointed Bulgarian defence and foreign ministers are due in Athens. Turkey has already expressed official concern over the emergence of a West European Union (WEU) military structure excluding Turkey and Greece which it fears will erode the role of NATO. Ankara is said to feel increasingly isolated. Thus, from Thrace, through the Aegean, to Cyprus, a miscalculation by Turkey or Greece could have tragic consequences. — Middle East International.

LETTERS

Is Cuba next?

To the Editor:

MANY people here in the U.S. believe that Cuba may be the next victim of U.S. aggression. This belief does not come out from void. For years the mainstream media has been conditioning the U.S. public to consider Cuba a threat and an enemy. In the last few months Cuba again became a focus point in the mainstream media. Coupled with the media campaign was an increase of military activity by the U.S. and its agents in and around Cuba. All this led The Peace for Cuba International Appeal, a progressive group that was initiated in the fall of 1991 by Ramsy Caltr and others, to call for an international rally to support Cuba. The rally was held in Jan. 25 in New York City.

The rally, Peace for Cuba, drew thousands of people from all over the U.S. Simultaneous rallies took place in London, Rome, Istanbul, Sao Paulo, Manila, Buenos Aires and Kingston. The New York rally participants included Ramsy Clark, Congressman Major Owens, entertainer Kris Kristofferson, Brazilian theologian Frei Betto, member of British Parliament Tony Benn, popular folk singer from Haiti Manno Charlemagne and many Cubans representing the art and cultural community of Cuba.

The demands put forward in the rally were:

1. There must be no military actions by the U.S., or its agents, against Cuba.
2. Covert military and economics actions must cease.
3. Economic sanctions against Cuba must be removed.
4. There must be no reprisals or threats against countries trading or having diplomatic relations with Cuba.
5. Travel restrictions must be lifted.
6. The U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay must be closed.
7. Cuba's sovereignty must be respected.
8. Relations between Cuba and the U.S. must be normalised.

Mustafa Tell,
Philadelphia.

Cards for a little pal

To the Editor:

From business friends we have been informed about a young boy in England, called Craig Shergold. Craig is 7 years old and an incurable cancer victim. His greatest wish is to be published in the Guinness Book of the records with the most collected visiting cards.

We have supported this action and sent him such a card. We hope you will do the same and address a visiting card to

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هكذا من الأمل

In election year, British voting system is under scrutiny

By Gerrard Raven
Reuters

LONDON — In the run-up to what could be an unusually close election, Britain's Conservative and Labour parties are haunted by the fear that an indecisive result might jeopardise the very system which keeps one or the other in power.

Conservatives — in power now — or Labour have formed Britain's governments throughout the period since World War II. This reflects the fact that, unlike European Community partners, Britain operates a "first past the post" electoral system of single-member constituencies.

This benefits big political parties but under-represents those with smaller, although widespread, support. Hard hit by this system, the minority Liberal Democrats argue for a system of proportional representation (PR).

Now they are looking to the possibility that one of the larger parties may need their support to form a government after this year's election, due by July.

Opinion polls suggest a close election might produce a "hung" parliament — with neither Conservatives, in power since 1979, nor Labour might winning an overall majority.

In that case, the Liberal Democrats say, a pledge of electoral reform is a condition for their agreement to a coalition. "Don't even pick up the phone unless you are prepared to talk about a fair voting system for Britain," party leader Paddy Ashdown has said.

The Liberal Democrats cite the last general election in 1987 to justify their increasing militancy on the issue.

Then, Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives won 42.3 per cent of the vote and got 375 seats in the House of Commons. The alliance of two parties which was later to form the Liberal Democrats won 22.6 per cent of the vote and just 22 seats in the 650-member house.

Conservatives, now led by Prime Minister John Major, generally are implacably opposed to electoral reform. But many observers of the British political scene are surprised at the increasing, though still minority, support for the idea within Neil Kinnock's opposition Labour Party.

Labour, which for years ignored the issue as irrelevant to its aim of implementing socialism, debated it at an annual conference last year. It has set up a committee on the issue which is expected to report after the election.

But deputy Labour leader Roy Hattersley used an argument also advanced by many Conservatives when he told his party that PR would result in a profusion of small parties and coalition rule. "I do not want to negotiate our policies away in return for a handful of... votes," he said.

Political analysts say that if Britain were to change its electoral system, three possibilities would be considered. The most modest change would be to the alternative vote, under which electors number candidates standing for single member constituencies in order of preference — 1, 2, etc.

If no candidate receives over half the first preference votes, the lowest placed candidate is eliminated and his votes transferred according to second preferences. This process continues until a candidate beats the 50 per cent barrier.

Many Labour electoral reformers back this system, claiming it would enable change to take place without destroying the traditional close link between a member of parliament and a constituency for which he or she is solely responsible.

But other advocates of electoral reform retort that the alternative vote is hardly more proportional than the existing British system as it retains single member constituencies.

Another possibility is the single transferable vote. This system, used in the Irish Republic, is a sort of alternative vote using constituencies returning several MPs.

It provides an element of proportion for party representation, but its advocates also claim that it gives more power to the voter than any other electoral system.

Voters number several candidates of each party in order of preference, according to their stance on key issues, their personality or even their race or sex, they say. They can vote across party lines if they wish.

To be elected, candidates must get a certain proportion of the votes from first or subsequent preferences — in the case of a four member seat, for instance, just over one fifth.

The third possibility is that Britain should resort to the electoral system which, as victorious ally at the end of World War II, it helped to introduce in West Germany.

In this system half the members of parliament are elected as in Britain at present.

True motifs of U.S. foreign policy and role of the media in ensuring public ignorance of these motives

Pirates and Emperors International
Terrorism in the Real World

By Noam Chomsky

Black Rose Books, 1991, Montreal/New York

THE famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) professor of linguistics has at last provided us with a set of terms which we can now use in our discussions about terrorism and world affairs.

Taken from a tale by St. Augustine about Alexander the Great, Chomsky has coined the "emperor and thief" as the principle and "bit part" players on the stage of "international terrorism."

The emperor lives in Washington and the bit players could be living anywhere. The emperor is the wholesale terrorist while the thief is the retail terrorist. The latter claims a handful of lives while the former claims hundreds of thousands — both are criminals. One, the thief, is openly called a terrorist and prosecuted for his crimes. The other gets away scot-free, calling himself a defender of democracy and human rights — he is the emperor.

The emperor has clients who in coordination with him impose a world order tailored by himself and his men. The clients include right wing military juntas in South and Central America and democratic governments — South Africa and Israel. George Orwell would have used Chomsky's book as a major source of reference had he been around and decided to write a book "1994."

Chomsky carefully documents how the media in the United States chose to be servile instead of investigative during most of the 1970s and '80s when writing about terrorism.

Concentrating mostly on the Mediterranean Middle East and some countries in Central America, Chomsky unveils how "Western newsmen" covered up events in the "real world."

The author shows how U.S. interference in Central American countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua was a far cry from attempts to safeguard the world in the name of democracy. With American support, organisation and sometimes direct involvement, tens if not hundreds of thousands of civilians were bombed, tortured, raped, mutilated and dispensed with.

Atrocities in Central America were practically hidden by the free press in U.S. by the very fact that they were simply never reported. Had the United States public known who was responsible for the killings south of their border it seems very unlikely that they would have continued to support their government.

While "Pirates and Emperors" is by no means a complete study of the international terrorism supported by any country in particular, it gives readers a clear idea of how large the scope of terrorism is.

Chomsky concentrates on the campaign launched by the Reagan administration in 1981 to combat what it coined as the

time "international terrorism."

Ideologues and supporters of the Reagan campaign conducted large-scale public relations stunts, mostly in the press, to impress upon the American public and others that the terrorist monster was "Soviet inspired" and "aimed at the destabilisation of Western democratic society."

Since the American press, and to some degree the press of the rest of the free world, only stresses the terrorism of the pirates, the general public is unaware that the main victims of international terrorism in the last decade have been Central Americans, Cubans and residents of Lebanon.

BOOK REVIEW

Acts of terrorism such as the famous Ma'alot killing in 1974, where 22 members of an Israeli paramilitary youth group were killed in an exchange of fire when the man responsible — Moshe Dayan — refused to negotiate the release of Palestinian political prisoners, were reported as an unprovoked terrorist attack on defenseless Israeli youth. Chomsky points out that the Israeli napping of Palestinian refugee camps for weeks prior to the attack was never mentioned in the major press.

Citing the international outrage and furor after the Ma'alot incident, Chomsky cites an incident 10 years later when Israel bombarded a site on a northern Lebanese island where 15 fishermen and boy scouts were killed and 20 were wounded.

"One might ask why the

murder of Lebanese boy scouts is a lesser atrocity (than Ma'alot) — in fact, not an atrocity at all, since it was perpetrated by a country that cares for human life" (Washington Post) with a 'high moral purpose' (Time) perhaps unique in history."

The example is one of more than a hundred which Chomsky has carefully chosen.

He indirectly accuses the Western press of being accomplice to the emperors' terrorist policies, by not telling both sides of the story. For example, by omitting to report of direct peace proposals which Arab leaders, including Yasser Arafat, attempted to launch since the late 1960s, the press contributed to the justification for a continued state of war.

He quotes an Israeli paratrooper commander who admits that "the state of Israel has been killing civilians from 1947."

Israel, Chomsky points out, is a state for the Jewish people not for its citizens — a state which has an "institutional structure that in law and practice assigns special status to one category of its citizens granting them rights denied to others."

Chomsky tells the side of the story which for the most part has not been told — at least not where the decisions are now made unilaterally — in the U.S.

Since the time of Alexander the Great the story of the powerful and the oppressed seems not to have changed. When the pirate captured by Alexander the Great is asked, "how dare you molest the sea?" the pirate replies by asking: "How dare you molest the world?"



Cover of Noam Chomsky's book 'Pirates and Emperors'

In an updated version of a definition of terrorism Chomsky explains that "the term terrorism was once applied to emperors who molest their own subjects and the world; it is now restricted to thieves who molest the powerful."

By Mariam M. Shahin.

Pacific Ocean changes could affect world's weather

By Randolph E. Schmid
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A massive pool of warm ocean water is causing changes in the atmosphere that could produce unusual weather around the world in the next few months, the U.S. National Weather Service reported Monday.

As a result of this phenomenon, known as El Nino, more rainfall than normal is likely this winter across some areas of the United States, with unusually warm or cold weather in other parts of the country.

Currently the phenomenon is marked by a warm pool of water along the equator extending from the International Date Line nearly to the coast of South America. That water is nearly 4 degrees Fahrenheit above normal, explained Vernon Kousky of the Climate Centre.

This warm water "spreads almost a quarter of the way around the globe. So its massive and it has an impact on our weather. It has a global influence... because it disturbs the atmosphere," said Dave Rodenhuis, director of the Climate Centre.

El Nino is "probably the most important climate event beyond the annual cycle of seasons," he added.

Because the changes tended to be first noticed around Christmas-time, the phenomena was given the name El Nino, which is Spanish for child, a term often used to refer to the baby Jesus.

The phenomenon occurs every three to five years, sometimes in a mild form and sometimes strongly affecting weather patterns worldwide. Details of its causes are not fully understood.

But when it occurs, unusually warm air can be pumped into Canada, Alaska and the northern United States. At the same time, conditions tend to be wetter than normal along the U.S. southeast coast and the Gulf of Mexico. And the Atlantic and Caribbean hurricane season tends to be milder than usual.

The strong El Nino of 1982-83 was blamed for worsening the

devastating drought in Africa, causing a series of severe winter storms to come ashore in California, spawning the first typhoon to strike French Polynesia in 75 years — followed by five more in five months — deluging Peru and Ecuador with torrential rains and promoting the worst drought in two centuries in Australia.

Overall damage was estimated at between \$2 billion and \$8 billion by a United Nations analysis and the death toll topped 1,500 worldwide.

That doesn't mean that the disruption will be as great this time, however. A mild El Nino in 1986-87 was barely noticed, for example.

Another weather phenomenon is an Enso, the warming of the water in the central and eastern Pacific accompanied by changes in air pressure and winds over the ocean.

The normal easterly winds that push warm water toward Asia diminish or are replaced by westerlies. The warm water sloshes back toward the Americas.

Mr. Kousky said the current

Enso seems moderate, with characteristics in between the events of 1982-83 and 1986-87. "But we can't rule out further intensification of this event," he warned.

The fact that warm water is more likely to evaporate than colder water means it has more warm, humid air above it. Warm air is buoyant, tending to rise and cause its moisture to condense into clouds. That results in more rainfall in the warm area, he said.

The effects are spread out by the Jet Stream — a high-altitude river of fast-moving air going west to east, that guides weather across the world and often forms the boundary between cold polar and warmer air to the south.

El Ninos have been recorded periodically since the days of the conquistadores. Recent ones have occurred in 1975, 1972-73, 1969, 1965, 1963 and 1957. Evidence of the effects of El Ninos can be traced, in fact, back to 1532 when an unusually wet season apparently helped Pizarro and his conquistadores cross normally desert areas in what is now Peru.

USAID/JORDAN is seeking expressions of interest from qualified Jordanian technical consultants in the below listed areas for possible short-term contractual assignment to participate with a team of U.S. contractors in:

1. The preparation of a water management and conservation plan.
2. The preparation of the water quality improvement and conservation project document.

A detailed scope of work of the proposed 2 phase project is available on request.

The consultants required must have a recognised expertise on water related issues. The anticipated level of efforts follows:

Phase I SKILLS REQUIRED	PERSON-DAYS (APPROXIMATE)
1) Water & Wastewater Engineer	17 (during February - April)
2) Economist	17 (during February - April)
3) Hydrologist	15 (during February - April)
4) Public Administration Specialist	26 (during February - April)
5) Agriculturalist	22 (during February - April)
Phase II	
1) Hydrologist	18 (during May - June)
2) Water/Wastewater	18 (during May - June)
3) Agriculturalist	18 (during May - June)

Interested individuals with at least 10 years experience should submit Curriculum Vitae to the EXO/USAID/Amman, P.O.Box 354. Telephone No. 604171.

English language (speaking/writing) is prerequisites. The submittal date shall not be later than February 4, 1992.

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SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Marseille crashes at home to Toulon

PARIS (R) — French champions Marseille crashed at home to Toulon Saturday, only their second league defeat of the season. Both have come at the hands of their neighbours on the Mediterranean coast. Marseille's star-studded side, last beaten 1-0 at Toulon in August, fell by the same score, midfielder Andre Blanc scoring in the 20th minute. Though Marseille exerted considerable pressure, they could find few paths through the uncompromising Toulon defence. When they did they discovered keeper Luc Borrelli in superb form. In the last half hour, trainer Raymond Goethals threw Brazilian sweeper Carlos Mozer into the attack and switched Englishman Chris Waddle into the back four but with little effect. Toulon were the more dangerous in the closing period, threatening to increase the lead through former Marseille player Frederic Meyrieu, Franck Passi and Michel Pineda. Marseille's defeat allowed challengers Monaco to close the gap at the top to two points after an unimpressive 2-0 home win over struggling Sochaux.

Japanese take top 2 marathon places

OSAKA, Japan (AP) — Yumi Kogano and Akemi Matsuno, running their first marathons, both beat the Japanese record Sunday as they finished 1-2, ahead of Germany's Katrin Dörre, 20, who became the first Japanese to win this event, finished in 2 hours, 26 minutes, 26 seconds over the 42.195-kilometre course through the streets of Osaka, in western Japan. Kogano was more than 100 metres ahead of Matsuno, the Japanese women's record holder at 10,000 metres, who finished in 2:27:02. Defending champion Dörre, 30, was third in 2:27:34, followed by Japan's Yoshiko Yamamoto in 2:27:58.

McColgan wins half marathon

TOKYO (AP) — Liz McColgan of Britain, the world women's 10,000-metre champion, beat the world's best time by one minute and 21 seconds Sunday in a race more than twice as long — the Tokyo City Half Marathon. Steve Monaghan of Australia knocked four seconds off the men's best time in winning the men's division, 15 seconds ahead of Arthur Barrios of Mexico. Leading foreigners ran by invitation in a field of 4,737 — mostly Japanese chosen by lottery from among 16,000 entrants for the race. Another 89 racers competed in wheelchairs over the 21,097.5-kilometre course through Tokyo streets. Tokyo Governor Shunichi Suzuki fired the starting gun. McColgan finished in one hour, 7 minutes, 11 seconds, beating the previous women's world best time of 1:08:32. Lisa Ondieki of Australia was second in 1:08:33. Australian Lynn Clayton was third in 1:12:25. China's Li Juanzhong fourth in 1:14:35 and American Alicia Moss fifth in 1:14:42. In the men's race, Monaghan won in 1:00:27, beating the previous world's best of 1:00:31. Barrios was second in 1:00:42, followed by Cosmas Ndeti of Kenya in 1:01:04. Fourth-place finisher Lee Bong-Ju of South Korea was a shade behind in an identical 1:01:04.

China defeats Kuwait 1-0

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Hu Zhijun scored in the 28th minute to give China 1-0 victory over Kuwait Saturday and move into second place in the final round of Olympic qualifying for the Asian region. The victory gave China a 2-0-1 record for four points in the two-week, six-team, round-robin event, putting it two points behind Qatar, which leads the final round with a perfect 3-0-0 record. The top three teams in the final-round qualifying, set to conclude Jan. 30, advance to the summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain.

Nigeria beats Cameroon 2-1

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — Rashidi Yekini scored with two minutes remaining Saturday to give Nigeria a 2-1 victory over Cameroon and take third place in the African Nations Cup. It also appeared to assure the Nigerian centre forward of the scoring title in the tournament. His fourth goal of the tournament came after a breakaway run. Nigeria took the lead in the 75th minute with a goal from Friday Ekpo but Cameroon, which fielded a second-string team, tied it up 10 minutes later on a goal by Kessack Mabouang.

Tomba clinches skiing title

WENGEN, Switzerland (AP) — Italian star Alberto Tomba clinched the World Cup slalom title Sunday by winning the last race before the Olympics. Tomba posted his seventh win of the season with a two-hour total of 1 minute, 34.34 seconds, 0.62 ahead of overall World Cup leader Paul Accola of Switzerland. Armin Bittner of Germany finished third, 0.85 behind. Tomba, second after the first run, could even afford a near backward fall after the first dip of the second heat. His bullish style carried the 100-kilogramme Italian to his 26th career victory, tying Austrian great Franz Klammer's mark. With one slalom of nine remaining this season, he built an unbeatable lead in the specialty ahead of Accola. Tomba has 720 slalom points out of a possible 800. Accola has 508.

Compagnoni wins super-giant slalom

MORZINE, France (AP) — Deborah Compagnoni switched skis and tamed a lightning-fast course to win a super-giant slalom Sunday, the first Italian woman to capture a World Cup race since 1986. Compagnoni, 21, using longer skis for the first time, completed the 1.75-kilometre course in 1 minute, 11.02 seconds to defeat two-time world champion Ulrike Maier by nearly half a second. Norway's Merete Fjeldavli, one of several last starters to record good times on a course that got faster as the race progressed, had her best World Cup finish, placing third. American Diann Roffe had the best super-G showing by a U.S. skier this season, finishing fourth.

Backley sets new javelin record

AUCKLAND (R) — Britain's Steve Backley broke his own world javelin record Saturday, becoming the first man to throw over 90 metres since specifications were altered last year. "It's a world record. There is no reason to suggest it will not stand," meeting manager Graeme Avery said at the Robin Tait Memorial Meeting at Auckland's east coast Bays Stadium. Backley hurled the javelin 91.46 metres on his fourth throw to better his own record of 89.58 set in July 1990.

Courier downs Edberg in Australian Open final

MELBOURNE (R) — Jim Courier, the quiet man of tennis, came out of his shell Sunday to beat world number one Stefan Edberg in the Australian Open final before celebrating with a swim in the murky waters of a nearby river.

Courier, the world number two, beat the top-seeded Swede in four sets 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 in two hours 53 minutes at Flinders Park to pick up his second Grand Slam title and further his growing reputation.

Edberg, playing his first tournament after a lengthy lay-off through injury, could not match the 21-year-old American's power and struggled throughout with his usually reliable serve.

Courier, demolished by Edberg in an almost flawless three sets in the U.S. Open final four months ago, said he was getting a bit tired of reading how anonymous he was.

"Believe me, I win my matches and I'm there — maybe next year you guys will know who I am," said Courier, the first American to win the Australian Open since Brian Teacher in 1980.

As if to prove himself capable of grabbing the odd headline, he and his coach Brad Stine immediately left the stadium after the trophy presentation and went for a swim in the nearby Yarra River.

"He (Brad) just said, 'if you win this thing I'll live in there,' so I said, 'If you go in I'm following you,'" Courier said.

"It was just in and out... it was really dirty," he added.

Courier's splash was reminiscent of Boris Becker's dash into a nearby park in 1991 before the

presentation after he had beaten Ivan Lendl in the final to become number one for the first time.

Alas for Courier, though he picks up a \$270,000 winner's cheque, his victory in the first Grand Slam title of the year does not earn him enough points to displace Edberg from the number one berth.

Under the Association of Tennis Professionals' (ATP) complex points scoring system, Courier is the narrowest of margins away from the crown worn by Edberg for all but 12 weeks of 1991.

The Florida-born American, who boosted his total career prize money to nearly \$3 million by his victory, was not concerned about topping Edberg.

"If the best I can do is to be number two in the world, then that's not so bad. If I do get to number one, it'll be a great day but I'm not really worried about it," he said.

Courier, who did not play a seed on his way to the final and missed the semifinal because his opponent was injured, showed no sign of any lack of big match practice against Edberg.

"I was very motivated for this match... I was timing the ball well and I went for my shots and they fell into place," Courier said.

In contrast, Edberg, who felt he had been toughened by a five-set quarterfinal against Lendl, never found his rhythm, argued about the quality of the balls and even seemed upset by vocal Swedish supporters.

"I did not play as well as I had done earlier and I had problems with my serve," Edberg said. "I didn't have my timing. I didn't play the big points as he did, it

was just not my day."

Twice the Swede complained about the softness of the balls. "They were totally different from any other day — they were much softer and that's one of the reasons I couldn't generate any power on my serve."

The Swede also said his band of chanting supporters, their faces painted in Sweden's national colours, among the 15,000 packed centre crowd had affected his concentration.

Given Edberg's uneven play, the match was never a classic with the right-handed Courier able to attack Edberg's second serve, hitting numerous fierce forehand and backhand cross court winners.

After Courier took the first set 6-3 with one service break, Edberg immediately broke Courier in the second game of the second set and held his service to level at one-set all.

Edberg promptly broke Courier again on his second break point in the first game of the third set and both players saw Edberg's subsequent failure to capitalise as vital to the rest of the match.

The Swede "played a very bad game to lose my serve" and Courier, sniffling victory, seemed to go up a gear. He took the third set 6-4 and the fourth 6-2, finally wrapping up the title with a rasping cross-court backhand.

Edberg, winner of five Grand Slam titles, must be wondering if he will ever add to his two previous Australian titles, both secured on grass at Kooyong, the tournament's former home, in 1985 and 1987.

Three years ago he had to pull



Jim Courier

out of a quarterfinal with a back injury, while in 1990 he defaulted in the third set of the final against Lendl with a torn stomach muscle. Last year, again against Lendl, he missed two match points in a tense semifinal before losing in five sets.

Meanwhile Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario on Spain beat Americans Mary Joe Fernandez and Zina Garrison in straight sets Sunday for their first doubles title as a team.

Sukova and Sanchez Vicario won 6-4, 7-6, (7-3) after saving a set point late in the second set. Sukova had won five previous Grand Slam women's doubles titles, four with Jana Novotna and one with Claudia Kohde-Kilsch. Fernandez ended up a two-time loser following her loss to Monica Seles in Saturday's women's singles final.

Bonaly wins women's European skating crown

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — Surya Bonaly skated a cautious portrayal of a bull fight in which the animal is spared Saturday, successfully defending her European figure skating title but demonstrating the weakness of the field.

The Frenchwoman completed five triple jumps did not attempt her rare quadruple jump, which she has achieved in practice. The jumps continued to demonstrate her much praised athletic ability, but her steps between the jumps showed little artistic merit compared to the trio of top Americans headed by world champion Kristi Yamaguchi.

"I was confident but you still have to be careful," Bonaly said. "I still have to work from now till Albertville to make it cleaner."

Germans Marina Kielmann and Patricia Neske took second and third. Kielmann fell twice in her routine but still moved up from fifth after the original programme.

The women's free skate completed the competition at the week-long European Figure Skating Championship with only Sunday's exhibition skate remaining, sending the top finishers with momentum as they headed toward the Winter Olympics next month.

Although it did not place any woman in the top three, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), formerly Soviet Union — continued its domination of the championships, winning eight of the 12 medals awarded and matching the Soviet Union's

performance of the last two years. It was paced by sweeps in the pairs and ice dance events this time.

Olympic contenders in the three other events highlighted the week-long competition. However Bonaly's performance showed the weakness of the women's event.

Bonaly had marks of 5.5 to 5.7 in a routine that was far behind the other champions crowned during the competition.

Natasha Mishkutienok and Artur Dmitriev of the CIS showed why they are considered favourites for the Olympic pairs title with a dream-like sequence to music by Franz Liszt.

Marina Klimova and Sergei Ponomarenko won the European ice dance title for the fourth

consecutive year. Although the late withdrawal of the World Champions Paul and Isabelle Duchesnay of France took some of the drama out of the event, the Russian couple showed they are out to regain their No. 1 ranking at the Olympics.

Paul Duchesnay injured his thigh nine days ago but has returned to the ice in practice. The layoff is not expected to keep the Duchesnays away from the Albertville showdown.

Petr Bana of Czechoslovakia took the men's title, putting two-time champion and favourite Viktor Petrenko of the CIS in second.

Petrenko, Alexei Urmanov and Viacheslav Zagorodniuk of the CIS were second, third and fourth.

Kankkunen puts pressure on Auriol

MONACO (R) — World champion Juha Kankkunen of Finland took advantage of snow-covered roads to put the pressure on Monte Carlo Rally leader and Lancia team mate Didier Auriol of France Sunday.

The Finn, trailing Auriol by 37 seconds overnight, closed the gap when he won the second of three timed stages in the morning, the first section contested entirely on

snowy surfaces. But Auriol, the 1990 rally winner who is more at ease in dry conditions, fought back to capture the third stage and held a 31-second lead over Kankkunen before the last three stages of the day.

Frenchman Francois Delecour, second overnight just 17 seconds behind Auriol, won the classic first stage at Burzet but dropped

back in the next two and was left in third place, 37 seconds down.

Defending champion Carlos Sainz of Spain lost ground in his Toyota as he experienced more problems with tyre selection for the widely varying conditions but he stayed in contention in fourth place, one minute 33 seconds off the lead.

These four drivers look set to

tussle for the title when the race ends Wednesday as fifth-placed Timo Salonen of Finland is already more than four minutes down in his Mitsubishi.

The morning session was disastrous for Armin Schwartz of Germany, the early leader of the Rally. He had an unhappy time with his choice of tyres and skidded off the road once, dropping back to sixth place.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY JANUARY 27, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You will have an early start today getting into the various ideas and conditions that you wish to put in effect but you will find that as the day progresses others will tend to see things differently and want to make changes.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) A message can put you out of whack unless you look at it from a purely practical angle. Consider all alternatives and don't get in a tizzy.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You would be wise to make no material commitments today although you learn much from conditions that now arise and later soothe mates' upsetment.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You want to get out from under contract with an unpredictable individual but do so in a diplomatic fashion and don't harbor any resentment.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) New arrangements where some personal matter is concerned is not now in your best interest despite strong pressure to do so.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Upset at not being able to do what both attachment and a good friend desires can lead to much confusion so handle matters in an intelligent fashion.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There are some worldly activi-

ties that do not fit in with the plan you have in mind with some home condition but don't be abrupt about changes.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Deciding just where you can be most effective today can be a big problem and cause you to make a sudden decision, not good and then be sorry.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Making any sudden commitment to another individual easily can be just the wrong thing to do and you need more information and a balanced judgement before acting.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are determined to get a person who seems to you to be flighty to do things as you wish but it would only lead to confrontations.

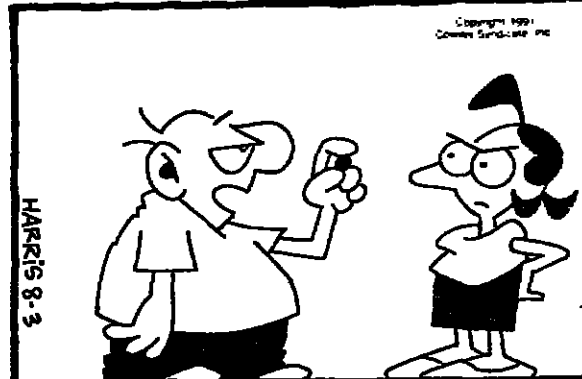
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Stick to the task you have started to do this morning despite the importunities of a distressed person who wants to involve you in a mess.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Over concentration on some pleasure could cause an unnecessary split with one who is a good friend and fond of you so consider situation carefully.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Home matters should take precedence in your activities now even though an outside matter seems to have some beneficial results if followed.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"These vitamins help me feel better — one in each ear whenever you start complaining!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CATEX
NELK
RAMPHE
YECKAL



IN GOLF, THE BALL SELDOM LIES AS WELL AS THIS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

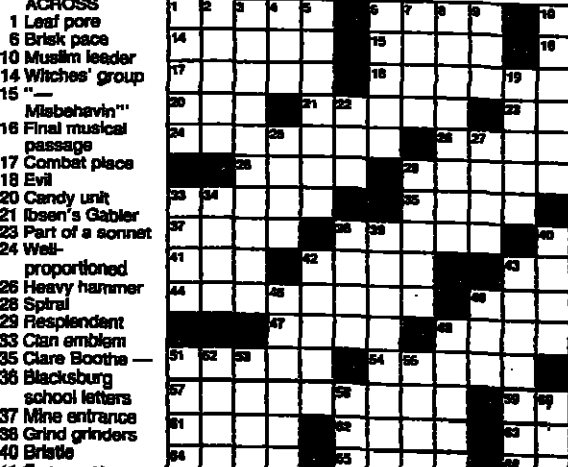
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: TAWNY CLUCK MEADOW ORCHID

Answer: A snob only wants to know people who don't want this — TO KNOW HIM

THE Daily Crossword by Valentina Barnes

ACROSS
1 Leafy port
6 Brief pace
10 Muslim leader
14 Witch's group
15 "Misbehavin'"
16 Final musical passage
17 Combat place
18 Evil
20 Candy unit
21 Isen's dagger
23 Part of a sonnet
24 Well-proportioned
26 Heavy hammer
28 Spiral
29 Resplendent
33 Clan emblem
35 Clare Scottie
36 Blackburg school letters
37 Mine entrance
38 Grid grinders
40 Brittle
41 Gun a motor
42 Legumes
43 City near Cleveland
44 Beloved
46 Long time
47 Shuts in
48 Lands
51 Complete range
54 A Ford
56 Exit
57 Deviating from
59 Kind of ink
61 Appeared magnified
62 Eng. rear
63 Folklore creature
64 Artist Warhol
65 Jers
66 Sailing vessels



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

DOWN
1 Wound cover
2 Religious scrolls
3 Too busy
4 Some adults
5 Site of Disneyland
6 Corruption
7 Ger. song
8 Notorious
9 Sch. pp.
10 Frozan taper
11 Debatable
12 In union
13 Spar
14 Cosmotic
15 Eng. linear measure
16 Frost e.g.
17 Principal
18 Turnover
19 Dominate
20 -date (modern)
21 Capital of ancient Chinese empire
22 Carves cover
23 Czech river
24 Math. type
25 Too busy
26 Ship timber
27 Religious art form
28 Nimbleness
45 Intimate
46 Malt beverage
48 Nirvana
49 Vibrato
50 Closures
51 Fastive
52 Shortly
53 State of mind
54 Do housework
55 Alonzo
56 New Deal letter

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKQ762 ♠A107 ♣Q98 ♣5
Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKQ762 ♠A107 ♣Q98 ♣5
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KQ107 ♣954 ♠K102 ♣J52
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass
What do you respond?

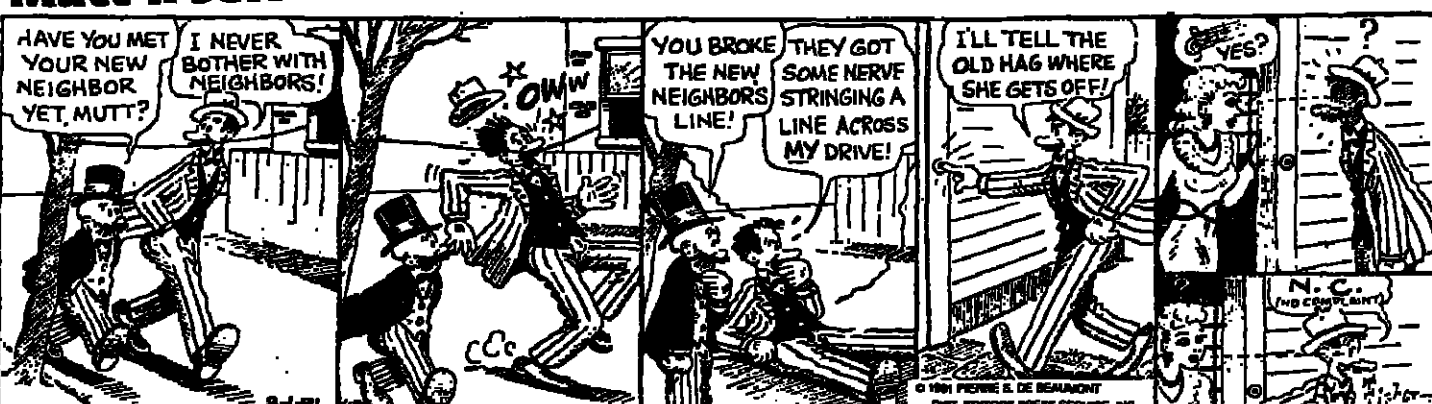
What do you bid now?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A108763 ♣65 ♣7 ♣J754
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 3 ♠ ?
What action do you take?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AJ96 ♣AJ94 ♠AQ1065 ♠Void
Partner opens the bidding with three clubs. What action do you take?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠83 ♣AJ8 ♠KJ5 ♠AK1052
Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?

Mutt'n'Jeff



Financial Markets

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (January 20-January 24, 1992)

AMMAN — Trading was cautious during last week's trading sessions in the aftermath of the intervention of two central banks at the end of the previous week. Speculation over the likely outcome of the G-7 meeting dominated trading activity, causing exchange rates to finish the week hardly changed compared to the previous week.

The dollar dropped against the yen Monday as traders discounted wide-spread speculation that the G-7 will decide to push the yen higher. Market participants were, however, more confused about the dollar/mark direction, after last week's central bank intervention and disagreement on the next likely move of interest rates in the two concerned countries. Sterling benefited when a British monetary official denied the possibility of a devaluation of the pound against the mark in the EMS, although observers attached little significance to the statement, and expressed doubts that it would still hold ground if the need arises.

Exchange rates continued to drift in directionless trade Tuesday, finishing with lower yen rates across the board in a technical correction, while the dollar traded lower against European currencies. Rumours of Fed intervention had earlier caused a brief surge against the dollar to 122.62 yen. The pound continued to receive support from British officials' comments, as Mr. Major was poised to come out of the Parliament that the British economy was quoted as saying to the recession after substantial interest rate reductions last year. The dollar ended at its lowest level of the week against the mark at 1.5865 marks to the dollar.

The U.S. unit fluctuated in early trading in the Far East Wednesday, as rumours swung from pro yen to pro dollar. The Japanese currency rose later in the day after the French Finance Minister said that the G-7 member countries will seek a higher yen. Observers attributed the significance of the remarks to the fact that they were the first clear sign that the issue of exchange rate levels was going to be addressed at the G-7 meeting. But many traders were still reluctant to establish significant positions, as the dollar approached its all time low of 120.45 yen, and views continued to diverge on the next interest rate move in many.

The release of December's New Housing Starts data in the U.S. had little impact on exchange rates, as it came within expectations. The dollar ended at its lowest level of the week against the pound sterling, at \$1.8060 to the pound.

The one-way rise significantly towards the end of the week, closing at its highest levels of the week Thursday, at 1.6067 marks, 123.85 yen and \$1.7850 to the pound. Friday witnessed a sharply lower dollar, however, as the G-7 meeting approached, and speculation over the outcome of the meeting intensified.

The U.S. unit thus hit a high of 1.6120 marks and 124.5 yen, before sliding after New York's opening on wide-spread rumours of Fed intervention. Although unsubstantiated, the rumour created panic among anxious traders, triggering waves of long dollar liquidation, particularly after the dollar breached several support levels, the last being 1.5959 marks.

Expectations for this week's exchange rates depend on which scenario is adopted regarding the results of the G-7 meeting. Some observers, however, expected the dollar to slide on fundamental factors, trading in a range of 1.5650-1.5950 marks, and 121.50-123.50 yen.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	17/1/92 Close	24/1/92 Close	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.7960	1.7970	0.06
Deutsche Mark	1.5980	1.5980	-
Swiss Franc	1.4065	1.4130	(0.46)
French Franc	5.4310	5.4285	0.46
Japanese Yen	124.45	123.55	0.73

USD Per STG

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	17/1/1992 1-Month (%)	24/1/1992 1-Month (%)	17/1/1992 1-Year (%)	24/1/1992 1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	4.00	4.31	4.00	4.47
Sterling Pound	10.62	10.25	10.62	10.25
Deutsche Mark	9.43	9.06	9.37	9.06
Swiss Franc	7.65	7.31	7.43	7.19
French Franc	9.68	9.43	9.87	9.50
Japanese Yen	5.37	4.84	5.37	4.71

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6760	0.6780
Sterling Pound	1.2193	1.2254
Deutsche Mark	0.4262	0.4283
Swiss Franc	0.4798	0.4822
French Franc	0.1247	0.1253
Japanese Yen	0.5480	0.5507
Dutch Guilder	0.3777	0.3796
Swedish Krona	0.1152	0.1158
Italian Lira	0.0566	0.0569
Belgian Franc	0.02056	0.02060

26/1/1992

Study connects Arab power grids on paper

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — Ms. Badawi said the study showed "electric interconnection within each group as well as interconnection between these groups is both technically and economically feasible."

"It would lead to substantial savings in capital expenditure and operating costs," she said. Such a grid meant countries would have no need to acquire backup systems as they could use power generated elsewhere.

The \$4 billion in savings, at current prices, could come from this alone, she explained. The fund has already spent \$154 million on linking the Jordanian and Egyptian power grids, has given Yemen \$64 million for a grid project and is spending \$69 million in a Libya-Tunisia link.

Jameel Al Alawi, Bahrain's electricity and water ministry under-secretary, said the Gulf states had already completed a feasibility study for linking their own power systems as part of the inter-Arab scheme.

The \$1.6 billion Gulf project, which would also include Saudi Arabia, was submitted for approval to the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), he said.

Bush says bank regulators causing credit crunch

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush has said that overzealous U.S. banking regulators are contributing to the economic slowdown by dampening banks' enthusiasm for making loans.

He said he was having difficulty trying to end the so-called "credit crunch," the refusal of banks to make loans readily available. He said the U.S. Treasury Department in recent days called in 500 regulators to a meeting to convince them they are over-strict on banks and should lighten up.

It is the regulators' responsibility to guarantee the soundness of a bank and to punish it if its standards for making loans are considered too lax.

The examiners got tougher after the collapse of the savings and loan industry that is costing American taxpayers billions to bail out. Mr. Bush said they had overreacted.

"What we're looking for is certainly not to go down the path we went down before, but to stop impeding progress and kind of putting a damper on this concept that good banks should make good loans," he said.

Polish parliament approves 3-month austerity budget

WARSAW (AP) — Parliament has reaffirmed its commitment to painful economic reforms by approving a first-quarter 1992 budget that slashes social spending in spite of growing protests against government austerity.

After two days of heated debate, legislators accepted the government's argument that it couldn't afford more social benefits and that further deficit spending would ignite a new round of hyperinflation.

The Sejm, or lower house, voted 195-135 with three abstentions for the plan that limits the government to a deficit of no more than \$1.5 billion for the first three months of the year.

The new budget will further cut government spending on schools, hospitals and pensions, while slashing subsidies for energy and fuels.

Prime Minister Jan Olszewski argued that his month-old government had no choice but to support the spending bill it inherited from the previous administration.

Mr. Olszewski has promised to review the January 1990 austerity plan, which he says has caused a depression for state industries. He has promised to issue a new plan in February to revive the state sector and reduce the 11 per

cent unemployment rate.

The drastic plan to transform Poland into a Western-style market system is the most radical attempted in eastern Europe. It has become a model for attempts to transform the former Soviet Union's economy.

The 1990 plan freed prices, capped wages and cut most government subsidies. Inflation fell from about 2,000 per cent in 1989 to 70 per cent in 1991, and a vibrant private sector emerged that now accounts for a quarter of Poland's yearly economic output.

The reforms have drawn strong criticism from workers in the huge state sector, where average wages of \$200 a month have not kept pace with prices and many fear for their jobs.

The subsidy cuts resulted in Jan. 1 price hikes of 20 per cent to 100 per cent for electricity, natural gas and hot-water heating.

That set off a series of protests and strikes by Poland's three major trade union federations, forcing the government to promise talks on future economic policies.

Addressing the Sejm, Finance Minister Karol Lutkowski said Poland is at "a crossroads," and he urged the legislators to remain on the same general course.

Prominent banker exposes weakness in Arab banking

By Samir Shafiq

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The total balance sheet figure of all Arab commercial banks put together was \$338,484.7 million in 1990 when Japan's Dai-Ichi Bank alone had a total balance sheet figure of \$405,958.9 in that same year.

According to Hisham Bsat, the regional director for Arab Bank Ltd. in Lebanon, the smaller amount mentioned above is the total of 252 Arab banks operating in Arab countries where, also, 120 foreign banks operate a portfolio of nearly ten per cent of the banking activities.

Dr. Bsat, addressing a seminar on banking merger organised by Arab Banks Union at Philadelphia Hotel Saturday, categorised Arab countries into three groups, according to the number of banks operating there:

1- Countries with large number of banks, such as Lebanon (83), Egypt (60) and the United Arab Emirates (47).

The 190 banks in the first category represent 51 per cent of the overall number of Arab banks and have a total balance sheet figure of \$76.2 billion, or 22.5 per cent of the overall balance sheet total of all Arab banks.

In the countries of this group, the lecturer said, some 60 foreign banks also conduct business.

2- Countries with limited number of banks, such as Iraq (2), Somalia (2), Djibouti (3), Mauritania (4), Algeria (5), Libya (5), Syria (5) and Kuwait (7).

This second group of 33 banks represents nine per cent of the overall number of Arab banks and have a total balance sheet figure of \$157.6 billion or 46.5 per cent of the aggregate balance sheet total of all Arab banks.

3- The nine Arab states left have 149 banks, or 40 per cent of the overall number, with a total balance sheet of \$104.6 billion, or 31 per cent of the aggregate amount.

Dr. Bsat said that although the general average balance sheet total for all the banks was \$909.9 million, the gap was extremely wide from a low of \$70.6 million in Lebanon to a high \$4,296.6 million in Iraq.

The lecturer gave further documented statistics of the branches of banks in the Arab World pointing to a large discrepancy concerning the availability of a bank branch to every 3,400 people in Amman or 3,800 in Lebanon and only a branch for every 79,800 people in Sudan.

Having reviewed the state of Arab banking, Dr. Bsat turned to the international scene and showed that recent political and economic events in the world would most probably, hinder the activities of Arab international banks and force them either to drop out or merge.

He mentioned that the financial merger of the European Community in 1992 would create a huge financial power which would be able to compete forcefully with other world monetary powers; he also noted that the annual savings increase in Europe was double the equivalent in the United States and also higher than Japan's.

He explained that the liberalism in financial services in Europe, the dominance of the U.S. in directing world monetary policies and the rise of Japan as an economic power would be important factors in shaping the international climate and exposing the standings of Arab economies in general.

Dr. Bsat detailed the historical movement towards mergers and specifically analysed the processes in Germany, France,

England, the former East Bloc countries and the United States. He also listed names of tens of banks which merged in Europe, Japan and the United States during last year to show the trend towards setting up new expanded, healthier and more sound financial institutions, among other advantages which he outlined as follows:

1) To maximise profit as shareholders anticipate a bigger stake of earnings from the new entity, exceeding those of the two previous institutions combined. The shareholders might also be seeking a higher share value for the new emerging bank.

2) To clean up the financial sector and avoid liquidation or financial difficulties encountering some bank. Such an approach is usually a decision taken by a monetary authority of a country.

3) To benefit from the concept of "economies of scale" through acquiring new technologies of mechanisation, saving on administrative expenses by hiring most efficient cadres and attracting best terms when dealing with other banks or companies.

4) To attract deposits and savings that could be considered of permanent nature and diversified as the size of the new entity will signal more security.

5) To better utilise the cash liquidity if an active and efficient treasury can minimise cash holdings at various branches.

6) To accelerate growth and expansion, especially when government monetary authorities restrict opening new branches for a bank. The new entity, as a result, would acquire additional customers, besides those who already have dealt with both of them before, at a cheaper cost and by providing better services.

Dr. Bsat said that under the last category, 15 out of the largest 20 U.S. banks were products of mergers.

The senior Arab Bank official later covered the types of merger among banks.

"Basically, any merger should occur horizontally, among banks of identical type and function, due to the different standards commercial banks and specialised banks are treated," he said.

Dr. Bsat explained that if a country's laws permit, a congeneric merger can take place, such as a merger between a bank and an insurance company. In addition, a vertical merger can be sought between small banks in various cities and a main bank in the capital or large cities.

The lecturer pointed out to other types of merger, namely: The friendly merger, the hostile takeover and the compulsory merger which are all self-explanatory.

The more complex subject of the methods used to bring about a merger was thoroughly reviewed by Dr. Bsat as it involved the art of evaluation.

Dr. Bsat said one way looks into the costs and advantages of a merger through a mathematical calculation, while another, more popular way, was to swap shares of both merging banks. A third choice is to buy the shares at the stock market.

Another alternative, according to the lecturer, involves purchasing the assets of the target bank by the management of the acquiring bank.

Dr. Bsat left to the audience the freedom to evaluate whether Arab banks mergers should take place outside boundaries and reflect afterwards on the Arab World. He said that 40 Arab banks and branches existed in Britain and 42 in France, but their presence in the U.S. and Germany was weak and limited and almost non-existent in Australia, L. America, the Far East and Africa.

G-7 issues 'most important communique ... in years'

GARDEN CITY, New York (R) — The world's seven richest industrial nations sought Saturday to allay fears of a renewed global recession by pledging to step up actions to promote growth.

In a communique that several countries hailed as a major breakthrough, the Group of Seven (G-7) expressed concern about recent sluggish growth and voiced confidence that things would get better soon. But it stopped short of agreeing on a joint strategy to achieve that.

"Today we made a commitment to do everything to accelerate the recovery of the world economy," French Finance Minister Pierre Bérégovoy told reporters. "This is the most important communique ... for years."

Economic policymakers from the G-7 — Britain, France, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan and

the United States — also welcomed recent economic reforms in the former Soviet Union and called on the International Monetary Fund to act quickly to bring the new states into the organisation by the spring.

In an unusually long five-page communique, each of the G-7 countries laid out plans to promote growth. But they failed to agree on a joint strategy, instead saying that the specific mix of policies would vary from nation to nation.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, who has been pressing his G-7 allies for nearly a year to do more to spur the global economy, trumpeted Saturday's agreement as a big success.

Washington's appeals for G-7 action to help the world economy have grown more urgent as the U.S. recovery has faltered and the countdown to November's

presidential election has begun. "There is a commitment, a disposition, a forward leaning towards world growth," Mr. Brady told a news conference. "This commitment is entered into by all seven participants in the meeting."

But Germany, which has borne much of the U.S. pressure for action to boost the global economy through lower interest rates, emphasised that it would stick with its own mix of policies and argued that was the best to promote growth in the long-term.

"There was complete understanding for the fact that every country would seek its own answers," German Finance Minister Theo Waigel said.

The G-7 said it saw a chance for lower German interest rates, but only after a whole series of conditions, including slower money supply growth and moder-

ate wage rises, were met. Japan also made no new pledges of action, instead pointing to last month's interest rate cut and its pending budget plan as evidence of its resolve.

For its part, the United States promised to unveil a "comprehensive programme to strengthen growth and competitiveness" during President George Bush's state of the union address.

The G-7 communique said the programme would include measures to improve consumer confidence, promote savings and investment and increase research and development spending, while staying within the 1990 budget deficit reduction accord.

France's Bérégovoy likened Saturday's agreement to the historic Plaza and Louvre accords of 1985 and 1987, respectively, for the degree of commitment shown.

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If you have registered during 1991 please confirm your continuing presence in Jordan by re-registering as soon as possible. Please also notify the Consular Section about any changes of address and/or telephone number. Such confirmation is in the interests of all British nationals in Jordan. If names are not re-registered within three months the Embassy will be obliged to consider that those concerned have left the country. The names will accordingly be deleted from the register.

If you are a citizen of a Commonwealth country which does not have an Embassy or Consulate in Jordan please ask the British Embassy, Consular Section, about registration formalities.

The British Embassy is located in Abdoun, near the Orthodox Club. Telephone 823100. The Post Office Box Number is 87.

The Consular Section is open from Sunday until Thursday 0830 - 1200 hours.

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Yeltsin to take U.S. cities out of nuclear cross hairs

NEW YORK (AP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin said he intends to stop targeting U.S. cities with nuclear missiles and no longer considers the United States a potential enemy.

Mr. Yeltsin told the television network ABC News Saturday that "We want to change our military doctrine and turn our intercontinental ballistic missiles away from all cities of the United States."

Mr. Yeltsin said he has informed President Bush of his intentions, will make a statement on the matter Monday and will do so again Friday at the United Nations Security Council in New York.

The military posture of Russian leaders will be to "no longer consider the United States our potential adversary," Mr. Yeltsin told ABC.

However, Mr. Yeltsin did not address the issue of Russian nuclear missiles pointed at U.S. military targets.

The network broadcast only a portion of what it billed as an exclusive interview Saturday, saying the full interview would be aired on an evening news mag-

zine show next Friday.

Mr. Yeltsin's move would be the latest step signalling a stand-down from the cold war era of nuclear confrontation between the United States and the former Soviet Union.

The Bush administration has decided to halt the nation's nuclear bomb-building indefinitely, the Washington Post reported Saturday.

It will cancel production of the only nuclear warhead remaining on the U.S. military's order books, said the newspaper.

Meanwhile, skilled technical workers at Soviet mission control, for four decades nerve centre of a lavish Soviet space programme, are threatening to strike in protest over low pay, according to central television.

A report said even cosmonauts, viewed through the glory days of the Soviet-U.S. space race as a pampered elite, were not ruling out protest action over miserly rewards.

"Strike breakers would be hard to find here," a commentator said.

Television news said workers at Kaliningrad Mission Control, a complex near Moscow employing some 8,000 technicians, would hand over demands in a warning action during a linkup Monday between the orbiting Mir space station and a progress cargo ship launched last week.

It seemed unlikely the linkup, bringing supplies to two cosmonauts in space for some six months, would be affected.

Workers were expected to man consoles in the main control room for the delicate operation.

Officials at Kaliningrad, themselves angry over a chokeoff in funds, were not available for comment.

The report said civilian cosmonauts and rocket experts working at "energiya," the company that developed the Soviet shuttle and giant booster rockets, were protesting over pay amounting to little more than 600 roubles a month (\$6 at the Russian Central Bank rate).

That salary puts them on a level with a building labourer or taxi driver.

"Cosmonauts are reserving the right to appeal to the courts over their pay. It cannot be ruled out that they will stop working with their employers," the Saturday night report said.

Morale has been falling dramatically at mission control as the government has cut back funding for what had been the country's prestige programme. Shortages hitting all areas of the economy are dealing a hard blow to a programme long reliant on the best supplies available.

Directors who only five years ago had planned missions to Mars are now worrying how to save the programme from complete collapse. Supplies of materials have been disrupted by the decline of the once-dominant military-industrial complex and skilled workers are deserting to other better-paid areas.

"I find it difficult to look my workers in the eye," Viktor Surikov, deputy director of the space research centre that embraces mission control, said recently.

"The cream of technicians came here to what were considered elite jobs. Now I can't even guarantee their next salary."

Bangladesh struggles with Burmese refugees

DHUCHIA PALONG, Bangladesh (R) — Bangladesh officials called for international aid Sunday to help more than 65,000 Burmese Muslim refugees flooding over the border to escape what they say is persecution by Rangoon's army.

"We have only meagre supplies for the refugees but that will be exhausted soon because of the continuing influx of Burmese Muslims," government official Abdul Hakim Mandal said.

The exodus grew sharply after Dec. 21 when Burmese soldiers attacked a border camp of the Bangladesh Rifles, killing a soldier and prompting a military alert in Bangladesh.

Burma has since reinforced its 270 kilometres border with Bangladesh, raising its troops strength along the frontier to 75,000.

"We haven't had any fresh influx over the last couple of days, but those who are already here are putting a serious strain on us," Mr. Mandal told Reuters at Duchia Palong Refugee Camp, 25 kilometres from the coastal town of Cox's Bazar and close to the Burmese border.

He said the Saudi Arabia-based charity Rabita Alam Al Islami was already helping Bangladesh to help the Burmese Muslims, called Rohingyas, and offers of help had come from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the relief agency CARE.

"But the relief operation has not started in bulk yet, leaving the vast majority of the refugees un-fed or under-fed," Mr. Mandal added.

Mr. Mandal, in charge of the Duchia Palong Camp which has 2,500 refugees, said lack of funds meant that Bangladesh was not able even to build shelters for the refugees.

Burma says Rohingyas rebels fighting for an independent homeland in Burma's Arakan state are based in Bangladesh and are helped by the refugees.

Dhaka denies the charges.

Refugees at Dhuchia Palong said the Burmese army had demolished their homes, built camps with forced labour and kidnapped thousands of their women.

"They have even converted mosques into military camps and arrested 100 devotees while praying in one mosque in Maungdaw area last week," said Haji Zahid Ahmad, a member of the Rohingyas Muslim Social Welfare Organisation.

The influx of Burmese Muslims into Bangladesh began in 1976. Two years later 300,000 had crossed over.

Most went back to Burma in 1978 under an agreement between the two governments. But about 15,000 families who had fled from the refugee camps remained in Bangladesh.

Their number has since multiplied as a result of births and new arrivals, raising the total to about 300,000 again by the end of 1991, Cox's Bazar officials said.

"The latest influx from last April has brought in more than 65,000, making the refugee problems unmanageable," one official said.

But Mr. Hata, speaking to reporters after a meeting here of the world's seven richest democracies, said "I am convinced that in the near future, positive results will emerge" from the Bush visit.

Mr. Hata said the industrialised nations must put their disagreements behind them as the world "goes through a major transformation" and should "not make the world a darker place, but must be the ones who shed light on the world."

Mr. Hata said that because of the Bush visit the Japanese government told Japanese parts and components manufacturers that they should import more products "and not simply emphasise exports of their products."

U.K. Conservative lead fuels poll speculation

LONDON (R) — Britain's ruling Conservative Party opened a surprise three-point lead over the Labour opposition in an opinion poll Sunday, fuelling speculation of an early election.

Prime Minister John Major must seek a new mandate by mid-July, politicians said that a lead in the opinion polls — if extended — could tempt him to a snap poll on April 9.

The Sunday Times Mori Poll, conducted among nearly 2,000 voters between Jan. 17 and 21, showed the Conservatives making a dramatic turnaround since the last such sample a month ago when they were six points down to Neil Kinnock's Labour Party.

The Conservatives got 42 per cent of support, up from 38 a month ago. Labour was on 39 per cent, down from 44. The minority Liberal Democrats and others made up the balance.

It followed two opinion polls in Saturday newspapers showing a narrow government lead — despite an economy stuck in a recession and unemployment up sharply to above 2.5 million. Political commentators said one explanation might be a Labour pledge to levy new taxes on the rich to pay for bigger old age pensions and child welfare hand-

outs.

The Conservatives, in an election campaign that has, in all but name, already begun in Britain, allege Labour's definition of "rich" is elastic and many middle class families will suffer.

Britain's poor have been Labour's stronghold since the 1920s while the more affluent tend to be loyal to the Conserva-

tives.

The election is likely to be decided by a few hundred thousands "floating" voters, mostly in the lower middle class, in just a handful of the 650 parliamentary constituencies.

A budget, when Mr. Major may cut taxes and defy Mr. Kinnock to campaign on a pledge to put them up again, is scheduled for March 10.

Mr. Kinnock's deputy, Roy Hattersley, said Mr. Major "must be pretty despondent" at not having a bigger opinion poll lead after a poster campaign depicting Labour tax plans as a large bomb.

The Conservatives have held power since 1979 when Margaret Thatcher swept to office on a pledge to smash pro-Labour trade union barons.

Mr. Major succeeded the "iron lady" in 1990 after a revolt by Conservative backbenchers against her autocratic style.

The Sunday Times said the Mori Poll showed a revival of consumer confidence in the recession-hit economy.

It also said a brighter prospect for the pro-business Conservatives might buy the value of sterling against Germany's mark, perhaps allowing a vote-winning cut in interest rates.

But another newspaper, the Independent on Sunday, said a survey of 1,300 firms due out next week from the Confederation of British Industry would show a new slump in business optimism.

This newspaper also said that Labour would unveil a "shadow budget" to clarify its tax proposals.

Finance minister may join race for Irish leadership

DUBLIN (R) — The race is on to succeed Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey, with Finance Minister Bertie Ahern under intense pressure to join the leadership contest.

The Progressive Democrats, a small party which shores up the Haughey coalition, has warned it will pull out after Wednesday's budget if Haughey does not step down.

The crisis that looks almost certain to spell the end of Mr. Haughey's rollercoaster career erupted last week when his former Justice Minister Sean Donoherty said Mr. Haughey knew about the phone-tapping of two Dublin journalists back in 1982.

With Mr. Haughey now likely to bow to the inevitable pressure, senior sources in his ruling Fianna Fail (Soldiers of Destiny) Party have spelled out a likely timetable: He is expected to resign formally on Feb. 5 with an election contest held two days later.

The odds-on favourite to succeed Mr. Haughey is Albert Reynolds, a former dancehall owner sacked as finance minister in November.

Mr. Haughey, determined to have a say in who succeeds him, is keen to launch a "stop Albert" campaign and put his weight behind his successor as finance minister 40-year-old Bertie Ahern.

Japan aide tries to put good face on U.S. ties

GARDEN CITY, New York (AP) — Japanese Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata tried to put a good face on Japanese-U.S. relations and called President George Bush's recent controversial trip to Japan a success.

Mr. Bush visited Japan earlier this month with the chief executives of America's leading automakers and other industrialists to try to get Japan to open its markets.

Many Americans saw the trip as humiliating. Soon after, a leading Japanese parliamentarian called American workers lazy and uneducated, sparking an uproar and a "boy American first" campaign in the U.S.

But Mr. Hata, speaking to reporters after a meeting here of the world's seven richest democracies, said "I am convinced that in the near future, positive results will emerge" from the Bush visit.

Mr. Hata said the industrialised nations must put their disagreements behind them as the world "goes through a major transformation" and should "not make the world a darker place, but must be the ones who shed light on the world."

Mr. Hata said that because of the Bush visit the Japanese government told Japanese parts and components manufacturers that they should import more products "and not simply emphasise exports of their products."

Mr. Clinton's campaign has been on the defensive since reports surfaced in the Star newspaper two weeks ago that the 45-year-old governor had had affairs with several women.

Mr. Clinton denied the reports as "trash" and "lies" disseminated with the help of his Republican political enemies.

Then on Thursday, the Star reported that Mr. Clinton had had a 12-year affair with ex-cabaret singer Gennifer Flowers, now an Arkansas state employee.

Mr. Clinton called the reports untrue and agreed to appear on CBS to answer the allegations in detail.

In his statement, Mr. Nichols said the media had "made a circus out of this thing and now it's gone way too far."

"When the Star article first came out, several women called asking if I was willing to pay them to say they had an affair with Bill Clinton," he said.

"This is crazy. One London newspaper is offering a half million dollars for a story. There are people out there now who are going to cash in."

Ms. Flowers, who was paid an undisclosed sum by the Star for exclusive rights to her story, denied a year ago through her lawyer that she and Mr. Clinton had had an affair. But the Star quoted Ms. Flowers as now saying the affair lasted from 1977 to 1989.

COLUMN

Crowd attacks reporters watching annual goat-toss

MANGANESES DE LA VOROSA, Spain (R) — Angry villagers attacked photographers watching youths drop a goat from a church belfry Saturday in a controversial annual ritual, witnesses said.

At least two photographers were slightly injured and villagers smashed the equipment of several others who tried to snap pictures of the goat being dropped from the 15-metre-high tower into an outstretched canvas, witnesses said.

Police tried to prevent the ritual that begins the town's festival for St. Vincent. The government banned the goat-drop and it was condemned by animal rights activists. But residents in this town of 1,300 fought police and attacked their vehicles, witnesses said. Then the crowd turned on the assembled reporters and photographers.

Apparently angered by negative press coverage, residents beat an English photographer, smashed a Spanish television camera and attacked a Madrid newspaper photographer, said photographer Daniel Beltra and the Spanish State News Agency (EFE). The Madrid photographer was treated for head injuries at a nearby clinic, EFE reported. Most other journalists were ejected from the town.

Beatrice Dalle convicted of jewellery theft

PARIS (R) — Salty French film star Beatrice Dalle has admitted tearfully to stealing jewels from a Paris boutique and received a six-month suspended jail term and a 20,000 franc (\$3,700) fine.

Ms. Dalle, 28, choked on tears as she confessed to the theft after being bundled into the courtroom with her head wrapped in a black shawl to shield her from press cameras. "Jewels, I love them," she said in a soft, trembling voice.

Mr. Dalle was caught red-handed as she slipped jewels into her right thigh-boot at a store in Paris' chic Marais district. The two bracelets, four necklaces, five pairs of ear-rings and two signet rings she took were worth 25,000 francs (\$3,000). Her lawyer, Jean-Yves Lienart, said she had been lonely and depressed at the time of the theft last November because her husband had attempted suicide and then divorced her. He said Ms. Dalle, whose latest film Night On Earth is showing in Paris, found it hard to come to terms with stardom and yearned for anonymity. The case has reinforced the image Ms. Dalle projects on screen as a slightly unhinged femme fatale.

In Jean-Jacques Beineix's hit Betty Blue she played a glamorous, potting vandal who plucks out one of her own eyes.

Hard times ahead for Italian mushroom pickers

ROME (R) — Italy's Agriculture Ministry is preparing to get tough with the country's teeming hordes of wildcat mushroom pickers. Thousands of Italians descend on the countryside every weekend in search of prized varieties like Boletus Chabris, better known as pizza restaurant menus as Porcini. So thorough are the so-called "fungarioli" that the ministry has been forced to limit their pickings. A law being drafted imposes fines of up to 100,000 lire (\$45 on anyone taking over two kg (4.5 lbs) a day with heavier fines for people making excessive use of rakes, hoes and spades.

Peking opens hunting grounds for tourists

PEKING (AP) — The sport of China's emperors has returned to the Communist capital with the opening of a hunting ground, according to an official report. The Miyun Hunting Ground, a 4,000-hectare (9,800-acre) preserve, opened recently 132 kilometres outside Peking at the foot of the Wuling Mountains, the Xinhua News Agency said.

The report said it was the only hunting ground in North China, but did not give any information about other such places. Foreign and Chinese hunters can pursue pheasants, goats, deer, roe deer and dozens of other animals in the fenced-in hunting ground. The report did not say what it would cost them. A shooting range opened several years ago outside Peking and has become popular among young Chinese men in the capital because it is a rare opportunity to handle firearms. Urban residents in China are not allowed to own guns in China.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Belarus begun pullout of nuclear arms

MOSCOW (R) — The former Soviet Republic of Belarus has begun moving tactical nuclear weapons stationed on its soil to Russia for destruction, TASS News Agency said Sunday. The first batch of tactical arms had already left the republic's territory. TASS quoted the deputy chairman of Belarus's parliamentary Security Committee, Leonid Privalov as telling journalists in Minsk. He did not identify the weapons. Belarus and Ukraine have committed themselves to removing tactical — short-range — nuclear arms by this summer. Larger strategic missiles were expected to leave the two republics and Kazakhstan by 1994. Of the 15 former Soviet republics, only Russia would retain a nuclear arsenal. The fate of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal has been the chief topic of recent talks between Russian leaders and Western politicians including British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas. Russian President Boris Yeltsin assured them that the arsenal was firmly under his control following the collapse of the old Soviet Union.

U.S. 'moves away' from treaty

WASHINGTON (R) — The administration of President George Bush has taken a step which some U.S. officials say could lead to abandonment of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty, the Washington Post reported. Quoting unidentified U.S. officials, the newspaper said the administration had omitted the 1972 accord from a list of major, existing arms control agreements it is telling the former Soviet republics they should adhere to. The officials described the omission as the first step in a new Pentagon-led effort to junk the treaty by capitalising on legal uncertainties surrounding past U.S.-Soviet pacts. The Post quoted other officials as saying that Mr. Bush had made no formal decision on withdrawing from the ABM treaty. The decision to omit mention of the treaty, one of the central accords governing U.S. and Soviet nuclear policy for 20 years, reflected what officials said was an administration consensus that its terms were no longer relevant to U.S. security after the Soviet Union's breakup, the Post reported.

Gunmen attack Haiti political meeting

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Gunmen carrying automatic weapons attacked a meeting of political leaders, beat and terrorised them and fatally shot the bodyguard of the nominee for prime minister, witnesses said. The witnesses said the attackers were dressed in civilian clothes, but referred openly to a superior officer in the national police force's anti-gang unit. The attack appeared to be intended to derail an OAS-backed proposal to make Rene Theodore prime minister and work toward the reinstatement of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was ousted in a Sept. 30 military coup. The 34-nation Organisation of American States (OAS) imposed a trade embargo after the coup, crippling the already weak economy of the Western hemisphere's

China frees 9 Tiananmen protesters

HONG KONG (R) — China has freed nine dissidents jailed without trial for their role in pro-democracy protests more than two years ago, an American human rights activist said Sunday. John Kamm, a Hong Kong-based businessman sometimes used by Peking as a conduit for news about the fate of jailed dissidents, said the nine, including student leader Wang Zhiqin, had been released since last November. All had been held without trial, some since mid-1989. Mr. Kamm said he was told of the releases by two separate sources during several days of talks with Chinese officials.

Meningitis outbreak kills 100 in Uganda

KAMPALA (R) — A meningitis outbreak in northern Uganda has killed 100 people in the past month, officials said Sunday. Social events have been banned to reduce the risk of infection and 20,000 doses of vaccine have been sent to the area, they said.

13 killed in Sri Lanka bus attack

COLOMBO (R) — At least 13 people were killed and 32 wounded when a landmine tore a bus to pieces in eastern Sri Lanka Sunday, hospital sources said. They said the dead included two air force personnel. A military spokesman put the death toll at eight, including one airman, and said 16 were wounded in the attack which he blamed on Tamil rebels. The blast gouged a huge crater in the road at Arantalawa in Ampara district. "I am positive it was the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrillas," the spokesman said. The Tigers have been fighting for a separate state for minority Tamils in the north and east since 1983. The spokesman said an air force patrol which heard the blast ran to the scene and attacked the bombers. "There was a battle and a few terrorists are believed to have been killed," he added. However one of the airman who survived said from his hospital bed in Colombo that a group of 15 air force personnel was in the bus when the blast occurred.

Bush reserves day for the boys

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush had a pair of ritual visits to all-male social clubs on his agenda, and his spokesman defended the groups as "totally appropriate" although they exclude women. As in many other years, Mr. Bush's schedule Saturday included lunch with the Alibi Club, an organisation of about 50 businessmen, and dinner with the larger Altafa Club, which holds an annual men-only gala. "He has gone every year and he intends to keep going. And he believes these clubs are totally appropriate," Mr. Bush spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Friday when asked about the weekend activities.

Chinese premier begins European, U.S. visits

PEKING (AP) — Chinese Premier Li Peng left Sunday for a tour of Western nations and to attend a U.N. summit, marking Peking's re-acceptance by the world community following its blood crackdown on the 1989 Democracy Movement.

Mr. Li begins his European tour with a two-day stop in Italy, returning a visit by Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti to Peking last fall.

He is also to visit Switzerland, Portugal and Spain during his nine-day trip, with a detour to New York on Jan. 31 to attend a 15-nation meeting of the United Nations Security Council.

Mr. Andreotti's spokesman, Pio Matroboni, said Italy invited Mr. Li to show its appreciation for China's "important contributions" to solving regional conflicts, including improving ties with Japan, India and Pakistan.

During Mr. Li's visit to Rome, the two countries are to sign several agreements on economic, technical and cultural cooperation.

The trip is Mr. Li's first to the West since 1989, when China became an international pariah after its army opened fire on student-led pro-democracy protesters in Peking.

China has sought to gradually improve relations with the West since the crackdown, but ties with the United States remain severely strained because of disputes over human rights, arms control and trade.

Mr. Li has requested a private meeting with President George Bush while he is in the United States, but foreign ministry officials Sunday declined to say if it had been granted.

The Jackson-led Rainbow Coalition Forum Saturday offered the candidates the chance to lobby many of those who helped Rev. Jackson to nearly 7 million votes in the 1988 Democratic primaries.

With Rev. Jackson and Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder on the sidelines for the 1992 campaign, black activists who make up the bulk of the Rainbow Coalition are migrating to other campaigns.

But many of those at the forum said they were undecided and eager to hear the candidates address urban, racial, housing, poverty and other issues that have gone ignored for the most part in a young 1992 campaign dominated by appeals to the middle class.

In their appeals, the candidates mixed policy proposals and promises with praise of Rev. Jackson. All backed staidhood for the District of Columbia, help for joblessness and school problems in the inner cities, appointment of minorities and women to high posts and health care for all Americans.

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U.S. Democratic candidates court black vote

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presidential choice came up, looked at Rev. Jackson and said, "one of the best candidates is right here in the front row."

Meanwhile, a legal action against U.S. presidential candidate Bill Clinton which sparked a major furor over adultery allegations is being dropped.

Larry Nichols, who filed the lawsuit that originally alleged extramarital affairs by Mr. Clinton, said in a signed statement released Saturday night by Mr. Clinton's campaign office in Little Rock, Arkansas, that he would drop his suit.

The statement did not specifically apologise to Mr. Clinton, nor declare as false Nichols' allegations that five women had been romantically involved with the Arkansas governor.

Mr. Clinton, front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, and his wife Hillary were scheduled to appear on CBS Television later Sunday to try and put the adultery issue to rest.

Mr. Nichols' statement said: "I brought them (the women) into the public eye and I shouldn't have done that. The least significant parts of my case were those concerning the rumours. I have allowed the media to use me and my case to attack Clinton's personal life.

A public opinion poll released Saturday suggested the adultery controversy may be costing him, dearly in New Hampshire, the small New England state that

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